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EDITORIAL ECHOES

by

WILLIAM MORTON PAYNE

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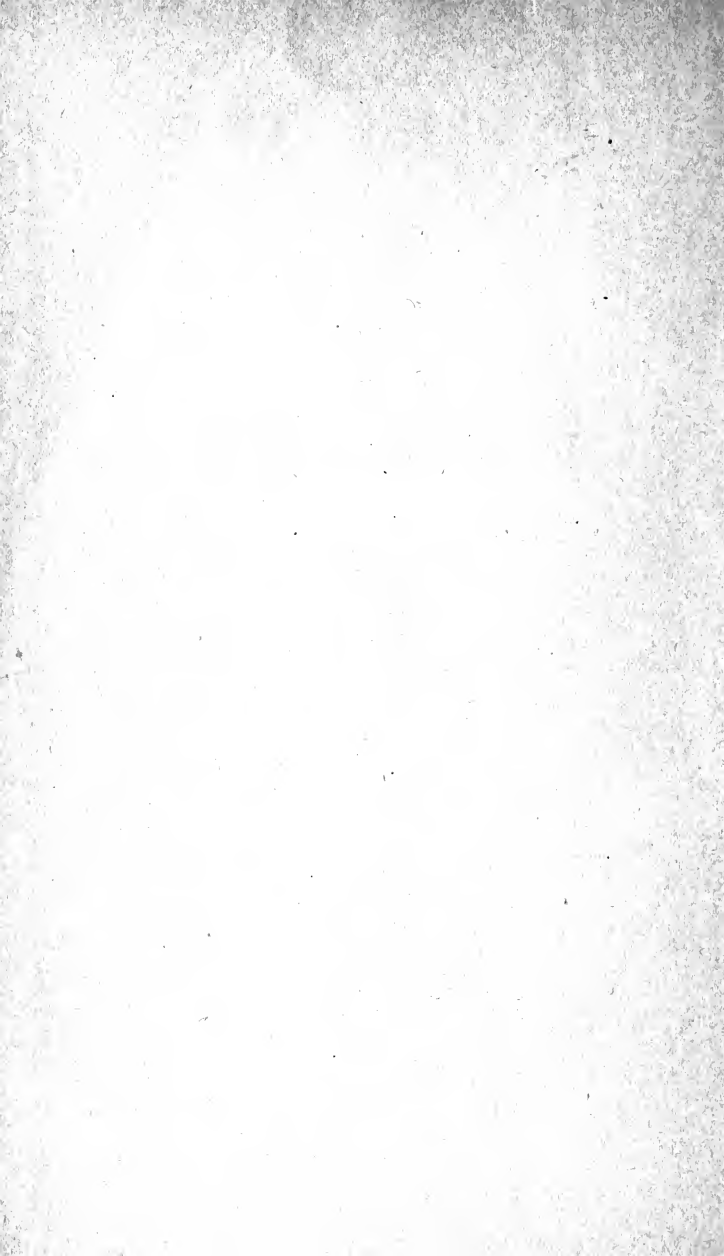
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WILLIAM MORTON PAYNE



CHICAGO

A. C. McCLURG & CO.

1902

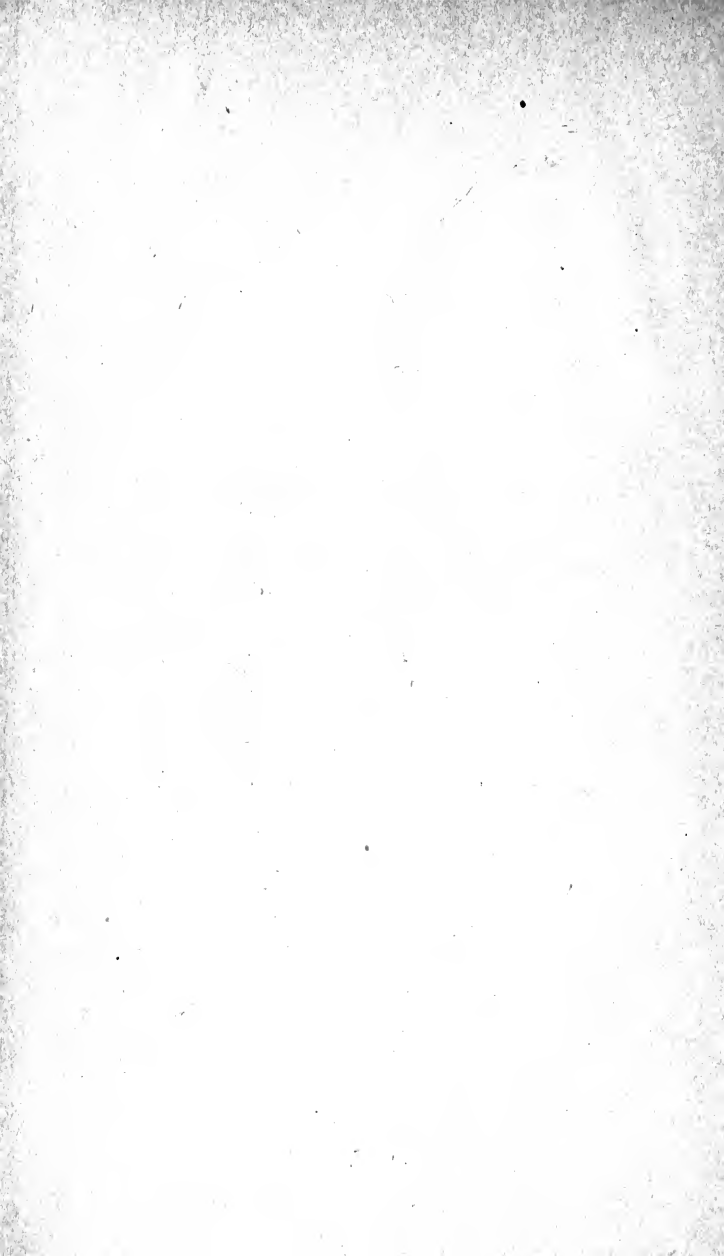
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TO
EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN
POET AND CRITIC
WITH THE LOVE AND GRATITUDE
OF THE AUTHOR

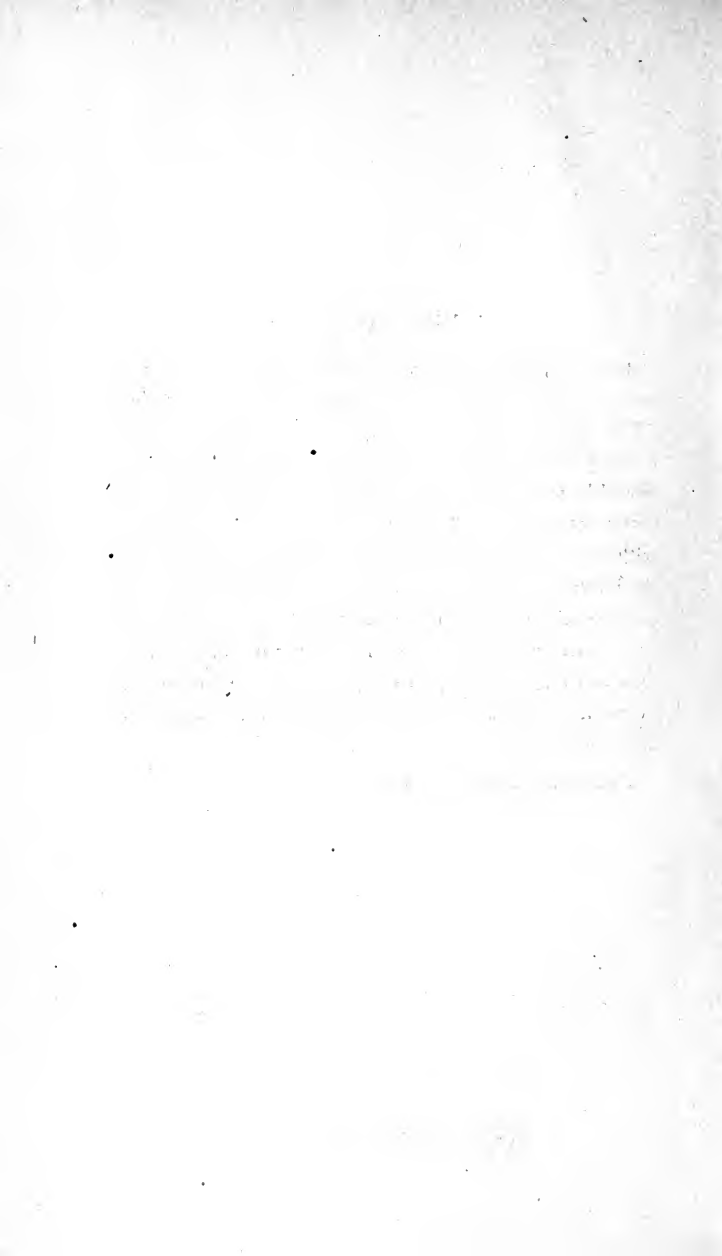


PREFACE.

THIS book, like the 'Little Leaders' to which it is a companion, is made up of leading articles written for 'The Dial' during recent years. The retention of the plural pronoun seemed advisable, because its elimination would have involved structural alterations that it seemed better not to make. The only changes that a comparison with the originals would discover are those required by the interval between the first publication of these unpretending papers and their present reissue. It is the hope of the writer that, even within their narrow limits, they may be found to have given expression to certain of the more vital aspects of the great subjects with which they are concerned.

CHICAGO, March 1, 1902.

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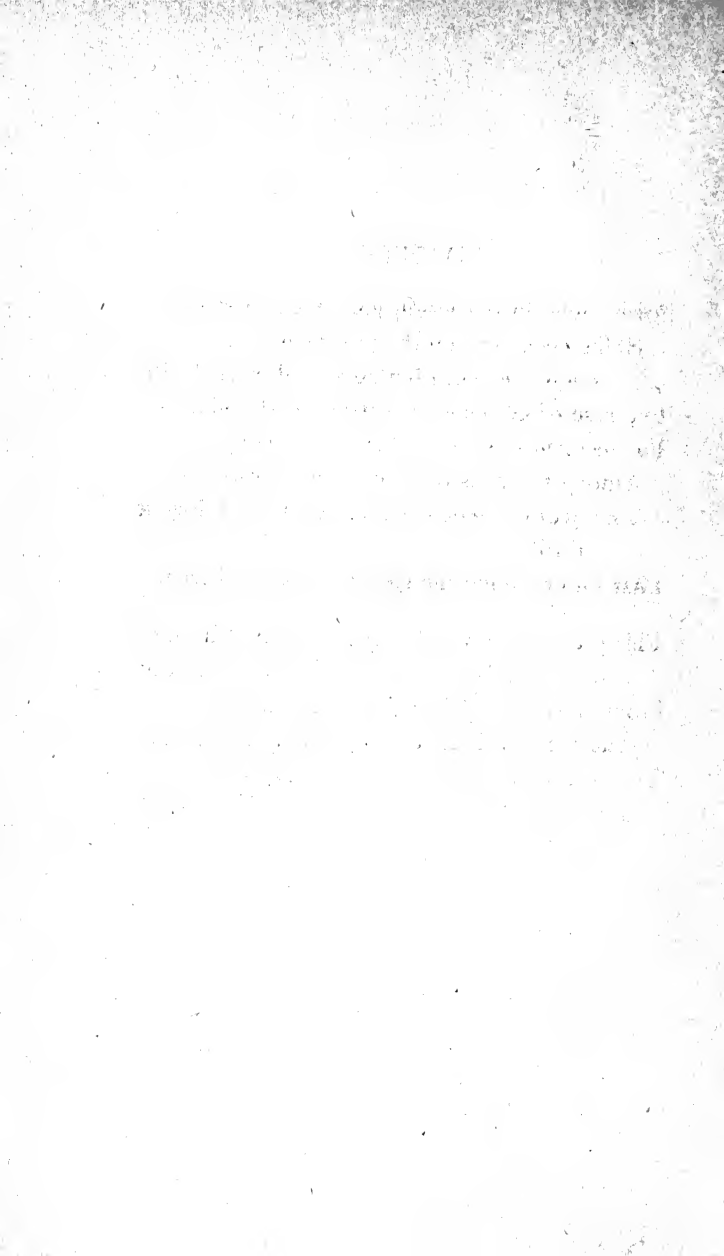
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DANTE.

POET ! who in thy vision journeyedst through
Hell's deep, and up the purifying hill,
Through fires both temporal and eternal; till
The rose of God's elect entranced thy view, —
To thee had life revealed as to but few
Among the sons of men, what terrors fill
The world's wild thicket, what the joyous
thrill
That knows alone the steadfast soul and true.

This great New World lay far beyond thy ken
When thou didst conquer life, and win release
From all its heavy load ; yet now as then,
And here as there, thy words may never cease
To breathe into the inmost souls of men
Thy strength, thy tenderness, thy perfect
peace.



DANTE IN AMERICA.

HERR SCARTAZZINI, the industrious German-Italian commentator upon Dante, has spoken of America as 'the new Ravenna of the great poet.' The comparison is a little forced, for the spiritual abiding place of the deepest and tenderest of singers is now the whole civilized world, rather than any circumscribed area thereof; but our own country may at least claim a considerable share in his heritage, and no modern students have done him greater honor or paid him more true allegiance than our Longfellow, Lowell, and Parsons, among the dead, and our Charles Eliot Norton, among the living. These names occur to everyone who gives a moment's thought to the history of Dante studies in America, but there are few who realize how many other nineteenth-century Americans have from time to time paid the sincere tribute of their praise to the poet who, beyond any other that ever lived, binds with 'hoops of steel' the souls of his followers to his

own. We are more than ever before impressed with this fact after reading Mr. Theodore W. Koch's excellent study of 'Dante in America,' published as the chief feature of the Fifteenth Annual Report of the Dante Society, and also issued by the author as an independent volume. The work is the outcome of a suggestion made by Professor Norton, who, as early as 1865, when the sixth centenary of Dante's birth was celebrated, sent to the authorities at Florence a list of the more important American contributions that had then been made to the literature of the subject.

The first chapters of Mr. Koch's monograph are devoted to the work of the pioneers, among whom Lorenzo da Ponte, George Ticknor, and Richard Henry Wilde are the most noteworthy. The first of these three was a Venetian, who, after a picturesquely varied career in several lands, came to America at the age of fifty-six. It is interesting to note that he was the librettist of Mozart's 'Don Giovanni' and 'Le Nozze di Figaro,' and that when he began the book of the former opera, 'he started by reading a few lines from Dante's "Inferno,"' in order, as he says, to

put himself into good tune.' He lived in America about thirty years, and died in New York in 1838. His occupation in New York was that of a bookseller. He also taught his native language, and was an unsalaried tutor at Columbia College for a term of years. There is evidence that he lectured and wrote a great deal upon the subject of Dante, and his contributions to the short-lived 'New York Review and Athenæum Magazine' constitute the first American textual criticism of 'The Divine Comedy.' Not very much is known of his life, and his closing years are wrapped in obscurity. In the pathetic preface of one of his later publications, he says: 'During twenty-eight years I have instructed in my language, which *I, and no other*, introduced into America, two thousand five hundred people, of whom two thousand four hundred and ninety-four have forgotten me.'

At the time when Da Ponte was engaged in awakening our interest in Dante, a scholar of American birth was at work at the same task. What we may call the Harvard tradition concerning Dante began with George Ticknor, who had learned in Germany to know the poet, and

who, in 1831, was lecturing upon him three times a week at Harvard. Ticknor's second sojourn in Europe made him acquainted with 'Philaletthes,' otherwise Prince John of Saxony, who was then at work upon his well-known translation, and a number of evenings were spent at the Prince's residence. The meetings of this 'Accademia Dantesca' were devoted to discussion of the translation then in hand, Tieck being one of the participants. They were of much help to Ticknor, and the notes made by him at this time served as the basis of his subsequent class-room work at Cambridge. The historian Prescott was also interested in Dante about this time, and a letter written to Ticknor, and dated 1824, is interesting as 'one of the earliest American estimates of the great Florentine,' as well as for the critical insight which it displays. Prescott was never a close student of Dante, but his reading went far enough to show him the many ways in which the second and third *cantiche* are superior to the first, which some later and closer students have failed to perceive.

Richard Henry Wilde, of Georgia, an Irishman by birth, but an American by adoption, is

not very well known among Dante scholars for the reason that little of his work was ever published. He spent, however, several years in Italy, and devoted himself largely to the study of Italian poetry. His 'Life and Times of Dante,' which he left uncompleted, exists only in manuscript, and the last of the written sheets bears the date of 1842. During his stay in Florence, he made extensive original researches, and established several points that had escaped his predecessors. 'I examined everything belonging to my era in the archives, line by line,' are the words in which he describes his Dantean labors. The fact of chief interest in this connection is that he was one of the three men to whom we owe the discovery of the Giotto portrait in the Bargello. The credit for this discovery belongs to Wilde, Kirkup, and Bezzi. The search was set on foot by Wilde, and carried on with the aid of the Englishman and the Italian, the former of whom afterwards 'took to himself credit for everything.' Irving's account of the matter is perhaps as fair as any, giving Wilde his due, and closing as follows: 'It is not easy to appreciate the delight of Mr. Wilde and

his coadjutors at this triumphant result of their researches; nor the sensation produced, not merely in Florence but throughout Italy, by this discovery of a veritable portrait of Dante in the prime of his days. It was some such sensation as would be produced in England by the sudden discovery of a perfectly well-authenticated likeness of Shakespeare, with a difference in intensity proportioned to the superior sensitiveness of the Italians.' Simms was another American writer who wrote appreciatively of Wilde's work for Dante, and it may be mentioned that Simms himself knew the poet and translated a fragment of the 'Inferno' into English triple rhyme.

Upon the Dantean labors of Longfellow, Lowell, Parsons, and Professor Norton it is hardly necessary to dilate, so familiar are they to our readers. Two of these men have given us complete translations of 'The Divine Comedy' — the one in verse, the other in prose — while a third has given us a verse translation of about two-thirds of the work. Professor Norton has given us, in addition, a translation of 'The New Life.' Lowell, who may not be reckoned among the translators, has enriched our literature with

an essay on Dante which, in the words of a friend, 'makes other writing about the poet and the poem seem ineffectual and superfluous.' The sixth centenary of the poet's birth was signalized in America by Professor Norton's monograph 'On the Original Portraits of Dante,' and by the private issue of parts of the translations made by Longfellow and Parsons. Longfellow began to lecture upon Dante in 1836 at Harvard College, and continued this class-room work for some twenty years. His completed translation was published in 1867, with the notes and illustrations that have helped so many students during the past thirty years, to say nothing of the six noble sonnets that are known to all lovers of poetry. As early as 1843, Parsons gave to the public ten cantos of his translation, and prefaced them by the memorable 'Lines on a Bust of Dante.' He worked upon his translation at intervals for nearly half a century more, but died with the second canticle unfinished, and the third hardly attempted. The class-room work at Harvard, begun by Ticknor and carried on for so many years by Longfellow, was continued with even more of inspirational effect by Lowell, and has of recent

years been conducted by Professor Norton in a spirit worthy of the tradition handed down to him. The Dante Society, founded in 1881 by Professor Norton and others, is said to be the oldest organization of its kind in existence. Finally, it must be added that the American student of Dante may now have access to collections of material that are hardly to be equalled in any other country. The Harvard collection has been enriched by accretions from many sources, while the generosity of Professor Willard Fiske has provided Cornell University with 'what is in some respects the most remarkable Dante collection in the world.'

These are the facts of major importance concerning the history of Dante studies in America. For the minor facts, we must refer to Mr. Koch's admirable bibliography, which fills nearly seventy pages, and which includes not only editions and commentaries, but poems, magazine articles, and notes on the more important critical reviews of the works mentioned. For a first attempt at a bibliography of this sort, the work has been done with unusual thoroughness, and deserves high commendation. Year by year the entries increase

in number, and testify to a rapidly growing interest in the subject. The catalogues of many of our leading universities now offer special courses in Dante, and the leaven of this study is at work in our national life. It is possibly true, as Mr. Koch says, that 'there is no hope of Dante ever taking the place of a popular author with us, of becoming one of our intimates,' but it is also true that there are other ways than that of direct contact for the ideals of a great poet and thinker to influence the minds of the masses. A better acquaintance with Dante would undoubtedly 'leave us a sense of the emptiness of much of that which we make our boast, and would teach us the instability of national position and the permanence of moral worth alone.'

FRENCH POETRY AND ENGLISH.

THE subject of the comparative merits and capabilities of the French and English languages as media for poetical expression comes up periodically in the literary journals, and appears to be as far from settlement as ever. In its modern critical phase, the discussion seems to have found its starting-point in that puzzling final chapter of Taine's 'English Literature,' which makes an elaborate comparison between Musset and Tennyson, and returns a verdict in favor of the French poet. 'I prefer Alfred de Musset to Tennyson,' were the words with which Taine closed the chapter, and for many years his English critics refused to take such a dictum seriously, setting it down rather summarily as one of those aberrations of judgment into which the best of men are apt to be betrayed by the conditions of their own *milieu* and moment. No doubt the characterization of 'In Memoriam' as 'cold, monotonous, and often too prettily

arranged' lent color to the assumption that the French critic was incapable of feeling what Tennyson meant to his English readers, and that his preference for Musset was nothing more than an illustration of racial prejudice. After all, Taine was a Frenchman, poor thing, and could not be expected to know any better. These words would fairly sum up the undercurrent of feeling that ran beneath the various polite phrases with which his *bizarre* opinion was glanced at and dismissed.

The subject being thus brought into the forum of discussion, a great many English writers were found to hold a similar view, and it got to be a sort of critical commonplace to say that, while French prose was an unsurpassable form of expression, French poetry was not to be compared with English, that the French language was incapable of scaling the higher peaks of poetical sublimity, or of sounding the deeper harmonies of song. The weight of Matthew Arnold's authority was added to this concurrence of lesser opinion, and the question seemed to be settled. Moreover, who but an Englishman could enter into the spirit of English poetry, and how presumptuous it was for Frenchmen, one of the

most distinguished of whom had called Shakespeare 'a drunken savage,' to pretend to understand it. As for the ability of an Englishman to see all that there was in French poetry, and to expose the hollowness of its pretensions, that was quite another matter. Matthew Arnold, we are told, was fond of quoting French Alexandrines followed by Shakespearian verses, whereupon he would exclaim 'What a relief!' Now, with all due respect for this great critic, such a method of comparison proves nothing more than the possession of a fatuous national self-sufficiency on the part of the writer who makes use of it, and the fact that a French critic would reverse the process, and feel equally relieved by the Alexandrine cadence, is all the answer that such an argument needs. The ideal method of dealing with the dispute would probably be its reference to a court of arbitration composed, say, of Russians and Hungarians equally familiar with both French and English, if such might be found.

In the matter of mutual comprehension and appreciation, both French and English criticism have advanced, of late years far beyond the point at which it was possible for a Frenchman to ig-

nore English literature altogether, and for an Englishman to assume complacently the entire superiority of his own poetry over that of his neighbor across the Channel. There have been too many careful studies of English literature by French critics, and too many interpreters of French poetry to English readers, for either of these provincial positions to be maintained, and it is highly significant that a recent volume of essays by Professor W. P. Trent should again take up the question of Tennyson and Musset, this time to refer to it in the following language: 'To those of us who have been allowed to see the error of our way through our reading of Hugo, Leconte de Lisle, and Musset himself, who have learned to our surprise that much of what our teachers had told us about the insufficiency of the French language to the expression of high poetic thought and sentiment was due to mere ignorance on their part, a doubt has perhaps come more than once whether Taine was not partly justified in his preference for Musset over Tennyson.' This passage is significant simply because it abandons the old arrogant English attitude, and evinces a disposition to reopen the question once thought

to be closed, to reëxamine it in an enlightened spirit and with a candid mind. Mr. Trent by no means claims to reverse the former decision, but he does go so far as to say that 'it is certainly permissible for those who care for the lyrical expression of intense passion to maintain that they find little or nothing in Tennyson that takes the place for them of Musset's chief poems.'

'C'est cette voix du cœur qui seule au cœur arrive,
Que nul autre, après toi, ne nous rendra jamais.'

The whole general subject of French and English poetry was under discussion not long ago in the pages of 'The Saturday Review,' and it is not often that the 'silly season' of English journalism gets hold of so interesting a theme. The discussion was started by the irrepressible 'Max,' *à propos* of Mme. Bernhardt's 'Hamlet,' and for once this humming-bird critic plunged his beak into the very heart of the blossoms among which he was disporting. Complaining that 'Paix, paix, âme troublée !' for example, was entirely inadequate to reproduce the 'Rest, rest, perturbed spirit !' of the original — which is undoubtedly true — he said :

'The fact is that the French language, limpid and ex-

quisite though it is, affords no scope for phrases which, like this phrase of Shakespeare's, are charged with a dim significance beyond their meaning and with reverberations beyond their sound. The French language, like the French genius, can give no hint of things beyond those which it definitely expresses. For expression, it is a far finer instrument than our language; but it is not, in the sense that our language is, suggestive. It lacks mystery. It casts none of those purple shadows which do follow and move with the moving phrases of our great poets.'

With these observations the train was fired that led to a series of veritable explosions of opinion on the part of correspondents of the paper, and the discussion which was thus evoked continued for many weeks.

First of all, another 'M. B.' rallied to the defense of the language thus attacked, denied the charges *in toto*, and quoted various passages which were certainly not lacking, to a properly attuned ear, in the quality of mysterious suggestiveness. 'I maintain,' said the writer, 'that Racine's lines —

“Ariane, ma sœur, de quel amour blessée,

Vous mourûtes aux bords ou vous fûtes laissée!”

Are quite as suggestive as “Rest, rest, perturbed

spirit ! ” ’ We, for one, will not deny the haunting quality of the couplet, which casts shadows quite as purple as those of the Shakespearian phrase brought into comparison. This writer closed his letter with a felicitous revival of the old ‘Punch’ story about the little girl and her nurse. ‘And you must know, Parker, that in France they say Wee for Yes.’ ‘La! Miss,’ answered the nurse, ‘how paltry!’

The letter above described at once excited the combative instincts of Professor Tyrrell, who rushed into the fray with the argument that French is ‘an essentially emasculated tongue, in fact, pigeon-Latin.’ Had the Dublin professor been content to leave his argument unsupported by examples, all might have been well, but in an unfortunate moment he added: ‘When a Frenchman says a girl is “beaucoup belle” he is using Latin as a Chinese would be using English if he called her “good-whack good.”’ The week following this several further communications appeared, but the main subject was for the moment forgotten in the opportunity offered to say cutting things about Professor Tyrrell’s ‘beaucoup belle.’ As one writer remarked, ‘An

Englishman who said this would be treated to the courtesy due to strangers, but a Frenchman would be preparing for himself an unhappy manhood and a friendless old age.' After this interlude the original theme was again taken up, and illuminated, during successive weeks, by an array of views and pertinent quotations that were unfailing in their interest.

It may be said that such a discussion leads to nothing, which is in one sense true; yet in another sense we must say that it leads to a greater catholicity of temper and openness of mind, thus accomplishing a highly useful purpose. But the old misconception of French poetry as incapable of sounding the depths of the spiritual life is one that dies hard. We have never seen, on the whole, an abler plea for this view than was contained in a leading article once published in 'Literature.' 'There are two great ways,' we were told, 'by which men and nations may guide their thought: the way of materialism, and the way of mysticism. Surely we may sum up the whole discussion by saying that the French nation has chosen the former, and that the French language reflects the limitations of the material-

istic position.' Surely? Let this contention be met by Victor Hugo.

'Ne possède-t-il pas toute la certitude?

Dieu ne remplit-il pas ce monde, notre étude,

Du nadir au zénith?

Notre sagesse auprès de la sienne est démente.

Et n'est-ce pas à lui que la clarté commence,

Et que l'ombre finit?

'D'ailleurs, pensons. Nos jours sont des jours d'amertume,

Mais, quand nous étendons les bras dans cette brume,

Nous sentons une main;

Quand nous marchons, courbés, dans l'ombre du martyr,

Nous entendons quelqu'un derrière nous nous dire:

C'est ici le chemin.'

Again, 'French literature must have no strangeness in the proportion, no vague epithets that hint of worlds unseen and unsuspected secrets.' But what of M. de Herédia's magical verses upon the companions of Columbus?

'Chaque soir, espérant des lendemains épiques,

L'azur phosphorescent de la mer des Tropiques

Enchantait leur sommeil d'un mirage doré;

Ou, penchés à l'avant des blanches caravelles,

Ils regardaient monter en un ciel ignoré

Du fond de l'Océan des étoiles nouvelles.'

Our writer concludes with these eloquent words: 'Our debate is not of what is true, but of what is beautiful; the artist cannot hesitate between the sacramental words and the chemical formula, and it must be said again and again that from the French ports no ship sails into faëry lands forlorn. French literature is the most delightful garden in the world; but the neat hedges of that gay *parterre* shut in the view, and no man standing by the bosky arbors can behold the vision of Monsalvat or the awful towers of Carbonek far in the spiritual city.' The beauty of these words is obvious, and equally obvious their sincerity; yet thought of the work of Hugo alone is sufficient for their refutation. There is no note of music that he has not struck, no chord of the life of the soul that has not sounded from his lyre. The lyric rapture of 'Le Chasseur Noir' and 'Un Peu de Musique' is essentially one with the lyric rapture of Shelley, and above this height the wings of song may not be borne. The superiority of English poetry over French is in its quantity rather than in its quality. It may fairly be admitted that Shakespeare and Milton and Shelley and Tennyson outweigh Racine and

Hugo and Musset and Leconte de Lisle, but only those who are 'tone-deaf' to the music of French verse and untouched by the subtleties of its emotional suggestiveness can maintain that it never soars to the highest plane of imaginative beauty and spiritual insight.

WORLD LITERATURE.

IN the happy mediæval days it was easy to be a world-writer. When Latin was the language of scholarship everywhere, and when to be educated meant more than anything else the ability to read Latin, whatever writings were worth heeding promptly made their appeal to the whole educated public. It was not a very large public in point of numbers, but it was a widely-scattered one, and it had a thirst for ideas that puts us moderns to shame. When the confusion of tongues seized upon the European peoples, as a regrettable but inevitable incident in the development of their several nationalities, the world-writer in the old sense became extinct. Yet we cannot altogether regret that Dante, for example, wrote his greatest work in the vulgar tongue, or that Petrarch sought diversion from the serious business of the epic in writing certain Italian sonnets to a young woman named Laura. Nevertheless, 'The Divine Comedy' and the 'Can-

zoniere' could not hope to find readers outside of Italy, whereas the 'De Monarchia' and the 'Africa' could command the attention of all the world. We can easily understand why Petrarch looked slightly upon his sonnets, and why Dante hesitated a long while before turning from Latin to Italian. We can also picture to ourselves the astonishment of these men, could they have foreseen that posterity would hold of slight account all that they wrote in the language of scholars, and would treasure among the most precious of its literary possessions their compositions couched in the despised language of the common people.

When the languages of modern Europe came to be the recognized vehicles of literary expression, there could be no more world-writers in the mediæval sense. The Latin classics, of course, retained their prestige, and the Greek classics, so eagerly studied by the men of the Renaissance, quickly took their place beside the Latin, or rather took the superior place to which their extraordinary spontaneity and perfection entitled them. But the new writers of the Renaissance centuries were nearly restricted to the public of

their respective peoples. We have seen how Dante and Petrarch, standing as it were upon the water-shed that divides ancient from modern culture, contributed with doubt and hesitation to the streams that were to flow down into modern life for its refreshment and quickening. Boccaccio was in similar case, although perceiving rather more clearly that the vitality of Latin literature was well-nigh spent. When we come to Ariosto and Tasso, to Rabelais and Montaigne, to Cervantes and Lope de Vega, to Shakespeare and his starry train, we come to an age in which the most remarkable manifestations of literary activity are evidently indigenous to their own soil. There are no longer any world-writers, unless we apply the term to such belated classicists as Poliziano and Erasmus. If we contrast Erasmus, particularly, with any of the great writers just named, Shakespeare and the others not only write in the languages of their own people, but each of them embodies in his thought the distinctive characteristics and ideals of his own race. Erasmus, on the other hand, is no more Dutch than Italian, no more Italian than German, and he is almost as much English as he

is anything else. While it is true that the Elizabethan English displayed a remarkable zeal in the work of translation, their activities in this direction could not disguise the fact that the time for the development of European literature upon a common basis of interests and aspirations had forever gone by.

If we take a broad view of the three centuries from the sixteenth to the eighteenth inclusive, we shall see that for the history of literature they were centuries of nearly independent development in the five countries that really count. National interactions there were, no doubt, such as the influence of Italian upon English literature, or of French upon German literature, but these were on the whole superficial, and did not in any case seriously modify the bent of the national genius. Even the unifying influence of the classical heritage could not avail to accomplish such a result. This statement needs no further proof than is offered by a comparison between the treatment of classical subjects by Shakespeare and his fellows, on the one hand, and by the French dramatists, from Corneille to Voltaire, on the other. And when we remember that it is not much more

than a hundred years since Shakespeare received adequate recognition in Germany, or any sort of recognition in France, that it is even less than a hundred years since Dante came to his own in the hearts of Englishmen and Frenchmen and Germans, we shall realize the full meaning of the decentralizing process of modern literary evolution. We now speak familiarly of Shakespeare and Dante as belonging to the literature of the world, but for hundreds of years they belonged only to the literatures of their respective peoples.

Although world literature as a fact has a history of many centuries,—a history which covers the whole classical and mediæval period, down to the development of the modern tongues as suitable organs of expression,—world literature as a name is of rather recent birth. In other words, the point of critical self-consciousness at which the idea assumed definite shape was not reached until very modern times. Goethe was the first, we believe, to speak of the world literature, which to the prophetic view was even then shaping itself anew and rising upon a broader foundation than its classical prototype. Goethe also expressed

the belief that Germany would contribute some share of this new literature to come, a belief to which he of all men was best justified in giving utterance, for his is the one name since Shakespeare's that has by the common agreement of posterity been added to the list of the world's literary immortals. Since Goethe's time, the idea has taken shape in many minds, and every decade of the past century has seen the conditions grow more favorable under which a world literature in his sense is possible.

Let us inquire a little into these conditions. Some of them have to us the familiarity of the commonplace, although they were startling novelties not so very long ago. The linking together of the continents by electric wires and steel rails, the new means of transportation which have made of travel at once a delight and an easily-attainable method of self-cultivation, the multiplication and cheapening of printed matter whereby the news of the whole world is brought to us with little delay — these are the conditions that obviously suggest themselves, and it is plain to see that they have accomplished great things for the solidarity of mankind. But this solidarity of

sympathetic interest has for its necessary concomitant the solidarity of intellectual effort that is attested in so many ways, in coöperative movements and congresses, in broad educational programmes, in the increase of friendly intercourse among the peoples, and in the general growth of the cosmopolitan spirit. Under these modern conditions, the sort of world literature that Goethe had in mind has been shaping itself in spite of the barriers of language that tend to restrict the free communication of ideas. This difficulty is overcome partly by translations, and partly by a frank recognition of the fact that an educated man in our time must be able to read freely at least two modern languages besides his own. Neither of these agencies alone would suffice, but taken together they work wonders. Given a trained minority of students, all the time exploring and reporting upon contemporary foreign literature, given also a public of readers who have acquired the habit of looking abroad for ideas and inspirations, and no significant message uttered anywhere in Christendom can long escape the attention of cultivated mankind. In Goethe's own later years, his dictum was strik-

ingly illustrated by the European vogue of Byron, and all through the century, now by Heine, now by Hugo, now by many another writer, the free currency of thought that has made for a world literature in Goethe's sense has appeared among the most insistent phenomena of the age.

Finally, glancing at the intellectual life of the present time, we find corroborations of our thesis upon every hand. To say nothing of the work done in science and general scholarship, which becomes the common property of scholars everywhere almost from the moment of its first publication, we may find in the field of literature proper all the evidence we need. One has only to mention the names of Björnson, Ibsen, Tolstoy, Sienkiewicz, Hauptmann, Sudermann, Maeterlinck, and Zola, to make it clear that contemporary literature, in its higher ranges and when occupied with large ideas, knows no barriers of race or speech, and has the whole world for its readers. It is a particularly impressive fact that of the men just mentioned, the two who would by almost unanimous consent be singled out as world-writers *par excellence* write their books in languages that lie outside the province

of the most liberal education, and are known only in translations to the world at large. There is no writer living to-day who is making world literature of the permanent sort for which the names of Dante and Shakespeare stand, but there are numerous writers whose envisagement of the chief aspects of modern civilization is so sincere and profound that they can command almost equally the attention of readers in all countries, and fairly deserve to be called world-writers. That their number will increase rather than diminish during the present century is a prediction that it seems reasonably safe to make.

TWENTY YEARS OF EUROPEAN LITERATURE, 1880-1900.

WHEN we get far enough away from any literary period to view it in the proper perspective, twenty years does not seem a very long time. That term of years taken almost anywhere in a past century might, except for the purposes of intensive study, be summarized in a few words. But when the twenty years in question are those that lie just back of the immediate present, the case is different, and the task far more difficult. We have so many recollections and personal associations with the books and writers of the period in which we have lived that it is not easy to single out the things that call for special mention. We cannot see the woods for the trees. We are tempted to magnify unimportant happenings, and to attach undue importance to names that may be clean forgotten a generation hence. But, making the fullest allowance for such illusions as arise from our intimate connection with the

years in question, we cannot help thinking that the historian of the far distant future will see in the closing decades of the nineteenth century a period more noticeable than others of equal length for the rapidity of its literary development and the pronounced character of the changes which it has witnessed. One of its most marked characteristics will be seen to have been the great losses which it has sustained in the death of its most forceful writers, without any corresponding compensation in the appearance of others capable of filling the vacant places. That this is true of both American and English literature, using the latter term in its narrow sense, will appear evident upon a moment's reflection. In the case of both branches of literature in the English language, the losses of the last twenty years have been so many and so great, the new writers of real force so few and far between, that we may well ask the question: Whom have we left to present to the century upon the threshold of which we are now standing? Cleverness and technical mastery are indeed offered us in many forms by our newer writers; the cleverness is almost preternatural at times, and the technique

would put many of the older masters to blush. But the soul of literature does not live by these qualities alone, and, whatever momentary admiration they may arouse, they are not ultimately satisfactory. Nothing but genius gives lasting satisfaction, and to that we freely pardon those minor defects upon which pedagogues are wont to frown. Genius, however, is coming every year to be a rarer commodity in English literature, and the deficiency appears startling when we contrast the conditions of to-day with those of the sixties and the seventies.

With the Continental literatures the outlook is not quite so dark. The latter part of the century has been marked by a strong resurgence of national feeling among nearly all of the distinctive peoples of Europe. Magyars and Czechs are no longer content to be merged in the political conglomerate of Austria. Finns and Poles resent with increasing vehemence their subjection to Russian influences. Even the Norwegians chafe under the enforced union with their Swedish kinsmen, and assert their own separate nationality in every possible way. Thirty years of imperial Germany have really accomplished

much for that unity of feeling which was only a dream of the future when the King of Prussia assumed the title of German Emperor in the palace at Versailles. Even France, throughout all modern history more unanimous and self-centred than the other nations of the Continent, has achieved a greater solidarity than ever before under the *régime* of the Republic. The Mediterranean countries, also, have shared in this renewal of national feeling, of which evidence may be adduced from the recent history of Greece, Italy, and Spain alike. This fortification of race sentiment, which has played havoc with so many political ambitions, has proved highly stimulating to literary activity.

Let us enumerate a few of the developments of Continental literature during the past twenty years, indicating at the same time some of the losses that have been sustained. Taking first the outlying countries, as distinguished from France and Germany, which represent the core of present-day Continental culture, the following are among the more conspicuous facts to claim our attention. There has arisen in Spain a distinctively modern school of fiction, which has

justly challenged the admiration of the reading world. It is true that Alarcon and Señor Galdos occupied the field for some years before the period with which we are dealing, but even Señor Galdos, in his later manner, is a very different person from the author of his earlier series of books concerned with the romance of Spanish history, and, taken in connection with Señores Valera and Valdès, with Señora Bazan, and with the dramatist, Señor Echegaray, he marks a transition in the spirit of Spanish literature which affords the plainest evidence that contemporary Spanish thought is no longer bound to the traditions of the past, but takes an active interest in all the problems of the modern world. In Italy, the modern movement, although it offers the unhealthful phase illustrated by the work of Signor d'Annunzio, offers also the sane developments represented by Signor de Amicis, Signor Fogazzaro, and Signor Verga. Signor Carducci remains what he has been for the last thirty or forty years, the one great Italian poet of our time, great, that is, in a sense that provokes comparison with the best that any literature has to give us. In Hungary, Dr. Jokai, full of years

and honors, is the one writer who is generally known to readers everywhere; none of the younger men have thus far attracted much attention outside of their own country. Belgium is so closely affiliated with France that its writers do not appeal to us especially as Belgians; but to this statement there is the one noteworthy exception of M. Maeterlinck, whose work has had much vogue of recent years, and is particularly interesting on account of the way in which it illustrates some of the more exaggerated tendencies of what is called symbolism. M. Maeterlinck writes in the French language; the only living writer of Flemish generally known to English readers is the Dutch novelist, Heer Couperus, whose problem fictions have had a deserved success outside of Holland. That charming Dutch novelist who chooses to write under the name of 'Maarten Maartens' has made himself practically an English novelist by writing his books in our own language. It is within very recent years, that is, within the last decade, that the astonishing novels of Mr. Sienkiewicz have come to be known throughout the world, and have restored Poland to the literary

map of Europe, although the political map has no place for it. It would hardly be an exaggeration to describe this writer as the most remarkable genius who has appeared in Continental literature during the period which we are now reviewing. In his work the consciousness of a noble race becomes intimately revealed to us — more intimately, in fact, than in the poems of Mickiewicz, or even in the music of Chopin — and the great part played by Poland in the history of Europe is made known to us. When we turn to Russia, our first thought is of the fact that Tourguénieff was living and writing twenty years ago, and of the irreparable loss to literature when he died in 1883. Since then the one great name in Russian literature has been that of Count Tolstoy, but even of him, writing from a literary rather than from a sociological point of view, one is compelled to say, *stat magni nominis umbra*; for ‘Anna Karenina’ was published in 1877, and since then the author’s footsteps have been straying erratically about in the morass of didacticism. In the Scandinavian countries, the most important happening of the last twenty years has been the immense widening

of the bounds of Dr. Ibsen's reputation. Although for thirty years he had been producing play after play, including those great works upon which his fame will chiefly rest when the final account is taken, his name was practically unknown in 1880, except in Germany, outside of the Scandinavian kingdoms. It was in 1879 that Mr. Gosse, in his 'Studies in the Literature of Northern Europe,' first called the attention of English readers to the writer who has since become so widely read. Until well along in the eighties we never heard the name of Dr. Ibsen mentioned in this country, either in conversation or in print. Herr Björnson had for many years been known to our public as the author of certain idyllic tales of Norwegian peasant life, although even he was entirely unknown as dramatist or as lyric poet. The great widening of Dr. Ibsen's reputation coincided rather closely with the great change in method and subject-matter which came over his work about twenty years ago. In 1880 'The Pillars of Society' was three years old, and 'A Doll Home' had been published only the year before. It is upon these two plays, and their ten suc-

cessors, all dealing with the problems of modern society, that the author's reputation is even now chiefly based, a caprice of popular judgment which completely ignores his real masterpieces. The same caprice of popular judgment, which we do not believe that time will justify, makes of him at present a more conspicuous figure than his great Norwegian contemporary. But, however these critical values may be readjusted by the coming generation, there is no doubt that for the present generation Dr. Ibsen represents one of the strongest influences now operating in literature. In Danish literature, perhaps the most important name of the last twenty years has been that of Dr. Georg Brandes, which fact is particularly interesting as a revendication of the claims of criticism to consideration as one of the branches of literature proper. It is a somewhat noteworthy fact that in one country, at least, a literary critic should remain for a long term of years its foremost man of letters. We should not, however, fail to mention among the famous Danish writers now living the name of Herr Holger Drachmann, who as poet and novelist preserves the romantic tradition, and displays the

most surprising versatility of genius. He has been called the Danish Heine, and when we consider both his lyrical gift and his sturdy championship of liberal ideas, the comparison is not so far astray. In Swedish literature, the most conspicuous loss of the past twenty years came with the death of Victor Rydberg, whose influence for culture and the higher ideals of living has been likened to that of Matthew Arnold.

German literature in 1880 had no poets worth speaking of, unless we mention a few such writers as Geibel, Bodenstedt, Fontane, and the author of 'Der Trompeter von Säkkingen.' It had, however, an important group of novelists in Auerbach and Freytag, Herr Spielhagen and Herr Heyse. To-day, as in 1880, we still think of Heine as the last of the great German poets, although a few, perhaps, may claim for the author of 'Die Versunkene Glocke' the poetic laurel. Although Herr Spielhagen and Herr Heyse are still living and writing, their pristine fires are now little more than embers, and there can be no doubt that Herr Hauptmann now occupies the most conspicuous place in German letters. For

some years the race was close between him and Herr Sudermann, but at present he seems to have outdistanced his only serious competitor. The prominence of these two writers, who are distinctly the most serious representatives of the Young Germany of letters, is important not only because of the intrinsic value of their writing, which is considerable, but also because they have given a new impulse to that form of the drama which is both *bühnenmässig* and literary. This modern rehabilitation of the acting drama as a form of literary art has been going on in several countries, but in no other, not even in France, as noticeably as in Germany. The respect with which the playhouse and its associations are treated in that country represents one of the most important things that Germany is now doing for literature. But in spite of all that we may say in behalf of recent German literature, the fact must be recognized that the Empire has not, in the thirty years of its existence, accomplished as much as might reasonably have been expected. The output has been enormous, but mediocrity has characterized the greater part of it. It is only now and then that a poem or a book, a play

or a critical monograph, has risen above that dead level; very little of the German literature produced during the past twenty years has won for itself that wide cosmopolitan hearing for which no really important work, in our age of alert publishing and quickly diffused intelligence, has long to wait. Before closing this paragraph, we should say a word about the influence exerted by the writings of Nietzsche. That influence has been unwholesome and demoralizing, but it must be reckoned with in any attempt to trace the main currents of contemporary thought.

The French literature of the past twenty years resembles our own in the balance of its gains and losses, the former having been by no means commensurate with the latter. The greatest French writer of the century has died within the period under consideration, and such was his vitality, and such the astonishing fertility of his genius, that even his octogenarian years did not preclude him, up to the very last, from continuing to enrich the treasure house of French song. The death of Leconte de Lisle, although far less significant than that of Hugo, was still a heavy loss to French poetry, and there are many per-

sons to whom the wayward and poignant note struck from the lyre of Paul Verlaine came with a fresh charm that makes them sincere mourners of his death. Next to Victor Hugo, the greatest loss of French literature during the period under consideration was felt when Renan passed away in 1892, within a few days of the death of the greatest of our English poets. The death of Taine, soon thereafter, was also an event of more than common significance. Taine and Renan, however, had lived their lives and done their work. But it was the promise, even more than the achievement, of James Darmesteter that lent a peculiar touch of sadness to his premature taking-off. French literature has also lost the younger Dumas, Augier, Labiche, Feuillet, Daudet, Maupassant, and Cherbuliez. Flaubert died in 1880, at the very beginning of the period now under discussion. It is obvious that no such men are now left to French literature as those that have been taken away. To set off against the name of Hugo we have the names of MM. Sully-Prudhomme and Coppée. Against the names of the older dramatists we have those of MM. Sardou and Rostand. To take the place of the

lost novelists we have M. Zola,— whose present notoriety will not avail to save his literary reputation,—M. ‘Loti,’ M. Bourget, M. Rod, and a host of other excellent second-rate men. We have also, indeed, M. Anatole France, that well-nigh impeccable *prosateur*, but even his name cannot go far toward restoring the lost balance. The French literature of the past twenty years has been as prolific as ever, as far as the main departments of *belles-lettres* are concerned, but very few works in any of these departments command our attention by their preëminent excellence. There has been a noteworthy movement in poetry, in the direction of what is vaguely known as ‘symbolism,’ much discussed by those who affect the cult, but not to be considered very seriously by those who are concerned for the higher interests of French literature. The movement seems to be characterized by an impatience of all artistic restraint, a revolt against the chief canons of poetical form, a somewhat sickly cast of thought, and a tendency to exalt little men to the rank of great masters. This tendency is, of course, exhibited chiefly within the limits of its own clique of mutual admirers,

and is not characteristic of sober criticism, as represented by such men as MM. Brunetière and Faguet. In other words, there is in the France of to-day, as in every other country of Europe, a group of *jeunes*, who are trying all sorts of unregulated experiments in verse and prose, who are making a great pother about their doings, and who are minutely subdivided into little parties and sects, united only in their common endeavor to accomplish great things with small intellectual means. Far more creditable to the contemporary French spirit is that other and broader movement of thought which has been seeking, ever since the nadir of imperialism was reached thirty years ago, to regenerate the moral ideals of the French people, and to restore the atmosphere of earnestness which seemed to have been lost. How nobly Renan and Taine labored to this end is matter of familiar knowledge. Their efforts have borne fruit in the writings of Darmesteter and Guyau, of MM. Brunetière, Lavis, Wagner, and Rod, and of the Vicomte de Vogüé. If this movement has in some cases tended toward a reactionary neo-Catholicism, its net outcome has been for good,

and its influence upon the younger generation must have been great, if not at the present time exactly calculable.

Turning now to English literature — our own literature upon the other side of the ocean — the capital fact confronts us that in 1880 there were six great English poets among the living, and that in 1900 there remained but one. During the twenty years Tennyson and Browning, Rossetti and Morris and Arnold, all passed away, leaving Mr. Swinburne in exalted isolation, the only great poet of the nineteenth century who we may hope will live to carry far on into the twentieth its glorious literary tradition. Our age of gold has to all seeming reached an end, and Mr. Stedman, who a quarter of a century ago recognized in the years of the Victorian reign a distinct literary period which even then showed signs of drawing to a close, must himself be a little surprised at the completeness with which his prediction has been borne out by the event. In the place of our major poets we have now only minor ones, and the fact that we have them in larger numbers than ever before offers us no consolation for the loss of the great departed. Aside

from Mr. Swinburne, we are compelled to point, when questioned concerning our living poets, to Mr. Aubrey De Vere, Mr. George Meredith, Mr. Theodore Watts-Dunton, Mr. Robert Bridges, Mr. William Watson, Mr. Stephen Phillips, Mr. W. B. Yeats, and Mr. Rudyard Kipling. We hold these men in esteem, it is true, but however we may admire the delicate art of Mr. Bridges, for example, or the resonant virility of Mr. Kipling, our sense of proportion does not permit us to set these men upon anything like the plane occupied by the great poets who have died since 1880. And, with but few exceptions, our living poets seem to be no more than 'little sonnet-men,'

'Who fashion, in a shrewd, mechanic way,
Songs without souls that flicker for a day,
To vanish in irrevocable night.'

Prose fiction of some sort or other we have always with us, and the names of Mr. Meredith and Mr. Hardy would lend distinction to any period, but the great age of the Victorian novelists ended with the death of 'George Eliot' in 1881. Although frequently compared with that woman of genius, Mrs. Ward may hardly be said to fill her

place. Since her death we have also lost Lord Beaconsfield, Trollope, Black, Blackmore, and Stevenson. When we turn to the great writers of prose, the contrast between the living and the dead is seen to be almost as pronounced as in the case of the poets. Within twenty years, Carlyle and Ruskin, by far the greatest *prosateurs* of our time, have ceased to appeal to us with the living voice. The persuasive eloquence of Newman and Martineau has been hushed, and the plea for culture, voiced in such dulcet terms by Arnold and Pater, is no longer heard. All these men are now among

‘The dead, but sceptred sovereigns, who still rule
Our spirits from their urns,’

but to whose counsel we may no longer turn when new questions arise and call for new solutions. Of the four great men of science who have caught the ear of the general public during the past twenty years, and whose teachings have wrought so complete a change in the attitude of all thinking men toward the claims of scientific culture, and the place of science in education, Mr. Herbert Spencer alone remains to us. Darwin, Huxley, and Tyndall have died, but happily

they lived long enough to witness the general acceptance of the ideas for which they fought so good a fight, and to be assured that the evolutionary principle had won for itself the suffrages of all whose judgment was worth having. The older school of historical writing, as represented by Green and Froude, has given place to the school represented by Dr. Gardiner and the Bishop of Oxford. The scholarship of these men is no doubt deeper and more accurate than was that of their predecessors, but their 'literature' is sadly to seek, and their influence consequently restricted. The general reader with a taste for this sort of writing does not turn to the 'Select Charters,' but rather takes down from the shelf his well-worn 'Short History of the English People,' and is not particularly concerned with the fact that later research has invalidated some of its positions. The two most conspicuous cases of personal success achieved in English authorship during the past twenty years have been those of Stevenson and Mr. Kipling. Both afford striking illustrations of the 'craze' in literature. A few years ago we were told by many enthusiastic readers that in Stevenson the

great masters of our fiction had found a worthy successor. More recently we have been assured that Mr. Kipling is a great poet, and the ill-considered laudations of his admirers have been dinned into our ears. Such outbursts of uncritical applause always make the judicious grieve, but their effect soon wears away, and the men who occasion them come to be viewed in the proper perspective. Stevenson has already taken his place as an entertaining novelist of the second or third class, and his singularly lovable personality is not now mistaken for literary genius by any great number of persons. Mr. Kipling, likewise, is fast coming to be viewed as a member of the considerable company of the minor poets of to-day, and his essential message, the more closely we examine it, is found to make much of its appeal to the more vulgar tastes and the baser instincts of human nature. Mr. Stephen Phillips is the latest of the 'new poets' who are discovered and exploited now and then by English critics, and there is no reason thus far apparent why his case should not parallel that of all the others. He has, no doubt, an exceptional gift of refined poetic expression, but there is no distinct-

ively new note in his song; there is merely a new blending of the notes which are already familiar to us. To illustrate what is really meant by a new note in English song we must go back to Rossetti's 'Poems' of 1870, or to 1866 and the first volume of Mr. Swinburne's 'Poems and Ballads.' The past two decades have witnessed no such event in English literature as was marked by the appearance of either of the volumes just mentioned. When we contrast the period of the sixties and seventies with the period of the eighties and nineties we may realize all the difference between a period in which the creative imagination is at full tide, and a period in which the flood of genius is fast ebbing away. In the later of the two periods English literature has rounded out the great work of the earlier; as the great writers have died, only lesser ones have appeared to take their places; and many of the younger men, recognizing the futility of any attempt to carry on the old tradition upon its old lines, have become mere experimenters in new moods and forms, hoping to hit upon some promising line of new literary endeavor, but not as yet indicating with any precision the direction which will be taken

by the movement of the coming century. This restlessness, this confusion of ideals, and this uncertainty of aim are the unmistakable marks of a transition period in literature. A remarkable age has rounded to its close, and it is impossible to determine with any assurance whether the age to come will be merely critical and sterile, or whether it will give birth to some new creative impulse.

What has just been said of the last years of our English literature is generally true of literature throughout the world. Its activities are everywhere largely experimental; most of the younger writers in all countries appear to be convinced that their only hope of making a mark lies in the discovery of new methods and new forms. We seem to be living in an age of literary anarchy, in which every sort of excess or extravagance claims a hearing. There are schools and sects and cliques everywhere, but there are no controlling principles. This aggressive and unregulated individualism even seeks to bend criticism to its heterogeneous aims by denying the very principle of critical authority. It pretends that the belief in critical canons is a super-

stition, and that individual liking is the only test of good literature. Impressionism in criticism is so far in the ascendant that many people no longer find intelligible the point of view from which a critic can say of a composition that he likes it personally, but that it is nevertheless bad literature. Yet this is the point of view that every critic must at times be prepared to take, if he have any regard for the seriousness of his calling. Few critics have ever so succeeded in eliminating the personal equation from their make-up as to bring about an absolute alignment between their subjective impressions and their objective judgments. In the presence of all the diversity of purpose exhibited in the literary activity of recent years, and of all the diversity of critical opinion with which it has been greeted, the search for any principle of unity becomes well-nigh hopeless. There is, however, one fairly comprehensive statement which may be made, and upon which we are justified in placing considerable emphasis. The European literature of the last twenty years has been more distinctly sociological in character than the literature of any preceding period. The social consciousness

has been aroused as never before, and the complex relations of men and women, both to each other and to society in the aggregate, have supplied themes for a constantly increasing number of novels and poems and plays. A large proportion of the writers who have been named in the foregoing pages illustrate some phase of this new or, at least, heightened sense of the duties of human beings toward one another. It was more than accidental, it was rather in obedience to an irresistible tendency of human thought, that such men as Ruskin, Count Tolstoy, Herr Björnson, and Dr. Ibsen turned at about the same time, and with a common motive, from the past to the present, from the romantic to the real, from work in which the æsthetical element was predominant to work in which the ethical element was set, sometimes far too obtrusively, in the foreground. This movement resulted in a manifest loss to art, but it has accomplished much for the betterment of mankind. The change of aim and method which in these writers marks so sharp a contrast between their earlier and their later work is paralleled in many other writers of less importance. And many of the younger men, following

the biological law which makes the development of the individual to a certain extent an epitome of the development of the race, have started upon their career as idealists, only to succumb, after a few preliminary flights, to the tendency which has done so much to make of modern literature the handmaid of social analysis and ethical reform. The interests of pure literature have suffered in this transforming process; but life is even more important than literature, and it is possible that the final reckoning will show the gains to have balanced the losses. At all events, this introduction of an avowed social and ethical purpose into nearly all sorts of writing is the most characteristic thing that the last twenty years have done for the literature of the world.

THE GREAT BOOKS OF THE
NINETEENTH CENTURY.

AT the beginning of a new century it becomes proper to review the literature of the century just ended, and to ask what books have exerted the greatest influence upon the thought of the age. The inquiry has deep and enduring interest, because it affords one way, at least, and probably the most important way, of determining what the nineteenth century has done for civilization. We propose to confine our attention, in the present article, to the books of thought as distinguished from the books of art, and to enumerate, with some sort of brief accompanying comment, some of the works of the century that may fairly be characterized as epoch-making; the books, in a word, that have opened men's eyes to a deeper view of scientific or philosophical truth, and have made permanent changes in the current of human thought.

Considered in this respect, the book of the

century, beyond any possibility of a successful challenge to its preëminence, is 'The Origin of Species,' by Charles Darwin. The influence of this book ranks it with the treatises of Copernicus and of Newton, with the 'Contrat Social' and the 'Wealth of Nations.' It is doubtful if any other book, in all the history of modern thought, has been so far-reaching in its influence, or productive of such immense intellectual results. There is a difference, not merely of degree but almost of kind, between the intellectual processes of the men who lived before Darwin and those who have grown to manhood during the period in which the evolutionary leaven has been working in men's minds. We no longer think in the same terms as of old, and we see that the true measure of the power of the great thinkers of the past is to be found in the extent to which their work foreshadowed or anticipated the evolutionary method.

It is because the influence of Darwin has thus extended far beyond the biological field in which his work was done that his most famous book stands thus preëminent. Among the books that have proved epoch-making in more restricted

fields of thought, we may mention Lyell's 'Principles of Geology,' Helmholtz's 'Tonempfindungen,' Froebel's 'Education of Man,' Ruskin's 'Modern Painters,' and Maine's 'Ancient Law.' The science of comparative philology, which hardly existed before the nineteenth century, dates from the publication of Bopp's 'Comparative Grammar'; and the scientific pursuit of historical scholarship, whose ideals are very different from those of the eighteenth century historians, although Gibbon did much to anticipate them, really began with the publication of Niebuhr's 'Römische Geschichte.' Dalton's 'New System of Chemical Philosophy' laid the foundations for atomic chemistry, and the 'Mécanique Céleste' of Laplace provided a firm mathematical basis for the nebular theory, previously outlined, it is true, by Kant, but lacking in the confirmation that was brought to it by the masterly analysis of the French astronomer. Here is also the appropriate place for mention of the researches of Pasteur, which have proved so immensely fruitful in the domain of bacteriology, and upon which, more than upon the labors of any other investigator, the new science is based. To the work of Pas-

teur and his followers we owe the first rational theory of disease and its treatment that has ever been formulated, a somewhat surprising fact when we consider the paramount importance of the subject to mankind.

What were once supposed to be the foundations of religious belief have, during the century just ended, been sapped and mined by many agencies. The study of ancient civilizations has proved to be the merest fables many things that the credulous earlier ages accepted without question. The new scientific view of man and nature has also brought about a silent transformation in many matters of opinion once thought to be indissolubly connected with religious belief, but now seen to have little or nothing to do with it. As far as religion is a question of the interpretation of the Scriptures, the historical methods that have dealt so effectively with Greek and Roman tradition have also made an enduring impression upon the traditions of the Hebrew people and of the Christian church. The 'higher' criticism, which means simply the new historical criticism of sources and ideas, has triumphed so completely that little in the way of superstition

is left for it to slay. Many men have fought valiantly in this cause, and it is difficult to specify individual scholars. But if our test be that of direct influence upon great numbers of people, it is probably true that the 'Leben Jesu' of Strauss and the 'Vie de Jésus' of Renan have been the most important popular agencies in bringing about a restoration of the Christian religion to its proper place in the perspective of general history.

In the domain of economics, the most influential book of the century has probably been one whose teachings are repudiated by those who have the best right to speak in the name of this science. The propaganda of socialism has become so marked a feature in the political life of most of the civilized nations that it cannot be ignored in any survey of the tendencies of nineteenth century thought, and credit must be given to the book which, more than any other, has been responsible for this movement. That book, it need hardly be added, is the 'Kapital' of Karl Marx; and its force is not yet spent. Indeed, we are inclined to think that fifty years hence it will loom even larger than it now does among the writings that have most profoundly influenced

the thought of modern times. For the socialist experiment has not yet worked itself out, and it will not be discredited until civilization has suffered some very rude shocks. Mill's 'Political Economy,' on the other hand, while it has profoundly influenced the real thinkers in this field, and has an absolute value far exceeding that of 'Das Kapital,' falls short of being an epoch-making book, for the simple reason that, instead of setting new ideas in motion, its energy was devoted to clarifying the old ones, and to setting them forth in logical arrangement. It is still the best single treatise on political economy that has ever been written, and for this, at least, it deserves an honorable place in any review of the intellectual history of the nineteenth century. We are inclined to give a place in this connection to the writings upon political and social subjects of the great apostle of Italian unity, Giuseppe Mazzini. It is not merely because they brought about the political regeneration of his own country that these writings are of the highest importance, — although that would suffice to justify the estimate, — but rather because they brought the element of spirituality into the discussions with

which they were concerned, and supplemented the conception of the rights of man, of which something too much had been made during the period that followed the French Revolution, with the hitherto neglected conception of the duties of man, thus giving an ethical turn to the general movement of European emancipation, and allying it with something higher and finer than merely material interests. The teaching of Mazzini, enforced by the singular purity and nobility of his devoted life, has had a widespread influence upon political thought, and has given it an ethical impulse that would be difficult to overestimate.

Turning last of all to the philosophers, that is, to the men who, as far as may be, take all knowledge for their province, and seek to systematize the various results of special intellectual activity, we find the names of Humboldt, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Comte, and Mr. Herbert Spencer to be the conspicuous names of the nineteenth century. The 'Kosmos' of Alexander von Humboldt marks, in a sense, the end of the period of general scholarship and the beginning of the period in which specialization has held full sway. Never again can anyone hope to

master the scientific knowledge of his time in the sense in which Humboldt mastered it; even the magnificent achievement of Mr. Spencer falls short of that ideal and shows the futility of any further endeavor in that direction. We owe to Mr. Spencer the most thorough-going application of the conception of evolution to history that has ever been made, and that is glory enough for one man; but we cannot read his 'Synthetic Philosophy' without at the same time realizing that there are gaps in his knowledge and defects in his philosophical comprehension. We have the same feeling in more marked degree when we read Comte; and in his case, while recognizing his great influence, we must admit that it is an influence no longer active. Even the eloquence of Mr. Frederic Harrison cannot galvanize the 'Cours de Philosophie Positive' into any semblance of the life that left it a generation ago. Nevertheless, it will always be reckoned among the most influential books of the century just ended. Taking philosophy in the stricter sense, as primarily concerned with the ultimate problems of thought, the names of Hegel and Schopenhauer stand preëminent in the history of

the nineteenth century. The 'Logic' of the one and 'Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung' of the other have been the chief metaphysical forces of the period, although now, at the end of the period, we see that the former is a waning influence, while the latter is an influence still to be taken into account in any study of the forces which still sway the minds of thoughtful men. It supplies, better than any other metaphysical system yet produced, the needed corrective for that material view of the universe which would seem to be the outcome of modern science, and enforces the fundamental teachings of the philosophers — of Plato, and Spinoza, and Berkeley, and Kant — in the terms of the modern intellect, and with a cogency that is irresistible to the logical mind. We are inclined to believe that if the 'Origin of Species' is approached in its influence upon nineteenth-century thought by any other one book, 'Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung' is that book.

THE VICTORIAN GARDEN OF SONG.

IT is always difficult to fix the limits of a literary period. Such terms as the Age of Pericles, the Augustan Age (Roman or English), and the Elizabethan Age stand, indeed, for fairly definite concepts ; we recognize the fact that a certain unity of spirit and aspiration in the writers who made them famous justifies their employment as counters in the game of literary history ; yet scientific precision of statement is obviously out of the question where they are concerned. We are reminded, somehow, of the decorative swirl wherewith, in Mr. Vedder's designs for the quatrains of Omar, we find symbolized the convergence of all the forces and influences that meet in the hour of our conscious existence, only to diverge once more from that focus, that they may enter into other and we know not what combinations. Thus it is with the Victorian Age in our literature : we know that it has been

the outcome of the past ; we know, likewise, that its scattered elements will enter into the spiritual synthesis of the future ; but to us, whose lives have been shaped by its ideals, the immediate fact of its nearness to us is all-important, and the impulse to regard it as a concrete is well-nigh irresistible.

When Mr. Stedman published his 'Victorian Poets,' in 1875, he brought abundant and convincing logic to the support of the faith that was in us of the belief that we were nearing the close of a literary epoch as well-marked and as distinctly characterized as any that had preceded it in our history. The publication, twenty years later, of a 'Victorian Anthology,' prepared by the same skilful hand, confirmed the earlier impression, and left us with a deepened sense of the richness in poetical material and inspiration of the period in which our fortunate lot has been cast. That the end has been now reached is by no means certain, and the transition to the poetry of the new age will, no doubt, be made easy by many connecting links of melodious utterance, just as the poetry of Wordsworth and Landor did much to save from abruptness the passage

from the glorious period of Shelley, Keats, and Coleridge, to the no less glorious period of Tennyson, Browning, and Mr. Swinburne. Yet the signs of a closing epoch were, on the whole, clearer in 1895 than they were twenty years earlier, and Mr. Stedman's prognostication had not been flouted by the emergence of any new and distinctive poetical force. It was made at a time when six great poets of English speech wore the laurel upon living brows; since it was made, five of the six have gone 'where Orpheus and where Homer are,' and no new altar-fires have sprung up to dim the light of the single singer who still happily remains with us. It is quite certain that no twentieth century compiler of a Victorian anthology will be likely much to exceed the scope of Mr. Stedman's collection.

The octogenarian of to-day whose years have run parallel with those of England's Queen, and who has been all his life a lover of poetry, has had many things for which to be thankful, many sensations of the rarer and more exquisite sort. To such a person, coming to manhood, let us say, in the very year of the Queen's accession, the deaths of Shelley and Keats were but childish

memories, while the deaths of Scott and Coleridge doubtless seemed to ring the knell of creative poetry. Yet he may have been old enough to be captivated by the first poems of Tennyson, and to detect in them the new note which even then set the key in which the swelling harmonies of the coming age were destined to be scored. Possibly, also, he may have strayed, at the verge of manhood, upon 'Pauline' and 'Paracelsus,' and wondered at their strange cadences and virile strength. His first genuine sensation, however, must have been delayed until 1842, when the possibilities of Tennyson's genius were first fully revealed. The middle of the century found our lover of song in possession of 'The Princess' and 'In Memoriam,' and of a series of Browning volumes numerous and distinctive enough to put beyond question the fact that this poet also must be reckoned with. If, moreover, he had lent an attentive ear to the new voices about him, he could not have failed to be impressed by the quality of a thin volume, published in 1848, and entitled 'The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems.' At least, the appearance of 'Empedocles on Etna and Other Poems,' in 1853, must have

made it clear that a third great poet had arisen in Victorian England. The year 1855, when the subject of our imaginary biography was about forty years old, must still be remembered by him as an *annus mirabilis*, for it brought the 'Poems' of Arnold, Tennyson's 'Maud,' and the 'Men and Women' of Browning.

Some ten years were to elapse before another sensation of the first class was possible. The first series of Mr. Swinburne's 'Poems and Ballads' appeared in 1866, and even our hypothetical octogenarian, who then had a half century to his credit, would probably subscribe to the opinion of Mr. Saintsbury (a much younger man), when he says: 'I do not suppose that anybody now alive (I speak of lovers of poetry) who was not alive in 1832 and old enough then to enjoy the first perfect work of Tennyson, has had such a sensation as that which was experienced in the autumn of 1866 by readers of Mr. Swinburne's "Poems and Ballads." And I am sure that no one in England has had any such sensation since.' Our reader may, however, have been in a measure prepared for the experience by getting hold of the 'Atalanta' in 1864, of the 'Chastelard'

in 1865, and even of 'The Queen Mother' and 'Rosamond' in 1861. He may also have recognized the possibilities of still another poet, who put forth 'The Defence of Guenevere' as early as 1858. At all events, he can have had no doubt of the appearance of a fifth great Victorian poet when the year 1867 brought 'The Life and Death of Jason,' and the following year the beginnings of 'The Earthly Paradise.' England might now proudly boast of five great poets among the living; would there be a sixth? The question was soon answered. It was in 1870 that the friends of Rossetti persuaded him to exhume the manuscript collection of verse that had, in a passion of unassuageable grief, been consigned to the grave with the body of his wife, and to give it to the world. The publication of this volume gave to our lover of poetry the last distinctive sensation that he was to know. The period that has elapsed since 1870 has brought him no experience comparable with this, and his pleasures have been limited to the retrospective enjoyment of a rich past, and delight in the later productions of the six great poets whose fame was so long ago so surely established.

Mr. Stedman's 'Victorian Anthology' fills six hundred and seventy-six compact double-columned pages, eighty-seven of which are devoted to the six Victorian master-singers. No other poets are illustrated at similar length, with the exception of Landor, who stands in the forefront of the epoch, and, more than any other poet, serves to link it with the age of Shelley. Examples are given us of no less than three hundred and forty-three poets, thirty-six of whom belong to Australasia and Canada. The three hundred and seven English (as distinguished from Colonial) poets are grouped in three great divisions, corresponding to the beginning, the middle, and the close of the reign. In each of these divisions, subdivisions are formed, and the fine critical sense of the editor is displayed in the felicitous names that he has given to these lesser groups. Nothing could be happier, for example, than to classify Barham, Maginn, and Mahony as 'The Roisterers'; Barnes, Waugh, and Laycock under the style of 'The Oaten Flute,' or Locker-Lampson, Calverley, and Sir Frederick Pollock as writers of 'Elegantiaë.' This carefully-considered classification is in itself a great

help to the student, and often suggests affinities that would otherwise be likely to escape his notice. Nothing is lacking to make this great anthology all that could be desired. Besides the features of the work that have already been mentioned, there is such an introductory essay as Mr. Stedman alone could write, a section devoted to biographical notes, and indexes of first lines, titles, and poets. By way of adornment, to say nothing of such unfailingly tasteful mechanical features as we have learned to expect from the publishers of this work, the book has two appropriate illustrations in photogravure — the ‘Poets’ Corner’ in the Abbey, where so many of England’s poets lie buried, and the Queen, whose name will always be as firmly associated with that of Tennyson as the name of Elizabeth is associated with that of Shakespeare. No less noticeable than the fine critical taste displayed by Mr. Stedman in making his selections is the conscientiousness which has gone into every detail of his work. It would be difficult to imagine a better-made anthology, or one more likely to take a permanent place among standard works of reference. It belongs to the

small class which includes Mr. Humphry Ward's 'English Poets' and Professor Palgrave's 'Golden Treasury,' and hardly any other collections of English verse. We may well be proud as a nation that such a work for English poetry should have been left for an American to perform.

THE CREATIVE PERIOD OF
AMERICAN VERSE.

FIVE years after the publication of his 'Victorian Anthology,' in the very year which closed the account, for good or evil, of the nineteenth century, Mr. Stedman, with the 'American Anthology,' crowned his quarter-century's work for the appreciation and illustration of the English poetry of our modern age. In the performance of that work, criticism and selection have gone hand in hand, and the insight which has produced the best systematic valuations of our nineteenth century verse has also provided us with what are incomparably the best treasures into which the finer efflorescence of that verse have been collected. We owe Mr. Stedman a debt of deep gratitude for his loyal devotion to the interests of the poetry of our own time, and for the painstaking industry which, having previously supplemented the 'Victorian Poets' with a 'Victorian Anthology,' has in like fashion supplemented the

‘Poets of America’ with the ‘American Anthology,’ which we may now take in our hands.

In this portly volume of close upon a thousand pages we have a representation of the poetical activity of the national period of our history, beginning with the lyrics of Freneau, and ending with the work of certain of our younger men — graduates of the last few years — for whom a single line constitutes the appended biographical note. By actual count, the number of writers whose work receives illustration is five hundred and seventy-one, of all degrees of majority and minority. No anthologist can hope to satisfy all his critics, and in the present case some fifty or a hundred additional names might easily be suggested — by others than those who bear them — as worthy of inclusion; but this easy sort of fault-finding is no part of our purpose, and we are quite sure that no other hand could have performed Mr. Stedman’s task with equal skill, sympathy, and nice discernment, that no other mind could have been found so richly stored with the knowledge of the subject requisite for the making of such a collection. If some small proportion of the contents seem undeserving of

the distinction here conferred, we shall do well to take heed of the editorial hint that 'humble bits, low in color, have values of juxtaposition, and often bring out to full advantage his more striking material.' And the editor forestalls critics of the carping type by himself quoting Nathaniel Ward's couplet — which might else be quoted against him — to the effect that

'Poetry's a gift wherein but few excel,
He doth very ill that doth not passing well.'

After much hesitation and tentative experiment, Mr. Stedman determined upon a chronological rather than a classified arrangement for the present volume. The Victorian poets 'crystallize into groups, each animated by a master, or made distinct by the fraternization of poets with tastes in common.' The poets of America, on the other hand, do not lend themselves to such a system of grouping, except in a few cases. There is, no doubt, a certain unity in the methods and the endeavor of the academic group that we associate with the Cambridge and Concord and Boston of a generation ago, and something of the same sort may be claimed for the poets of the journalistic and semi-Bohemian group that

we associate with the New York of the corresponding period. But in the main, our poets have been characterized by individualism, by results that must doubtless be described as derivative, but that derive from the general English tradition rather than from any strongly-marked interactions and obligations to special leadership. The only satisfactory order of arrangement thus appeared to be that of sequence in time.

Mr. Stedman finds it convenient to divide our first poetical century into eight sections. The first of them has something of the character of a prologue, and includes such names as Freneau, Paulding, Allston, Wilde, and Dana. Then follow three divisions, of about fifteen years each, constituting what is called the 'First Lyrical Period.' In the first of these divisions we find Halleck, Drake, Bryant, Sprague, Percival, and Pinckney. In the second we find Emerson, Willis, Hoffman, Longfellow, Whittier, Poe, and Holmes. In the third we find Lowell, Whitman, Parsons, Boker, Taylor, and Stoddard. Then follows the 'Second Lyrical Period,' also in three divisions, each of about ten years. In the first we find Dr. Mitchell, Hayne, Mrs.

Jackson, Mr. Stedman, Mr. and Mrs. Piatt, Mrs. Moulton, Mr. Winter, Mr. Aldrich, Mr. Harte, Sill, Mr. Miller, and Lanier. In the second we find Mr. Gilder, Miss Thomas, Miss Lazarus, Mr. Van Dyke, and Mr. R. U. Johnson. In the third we find Mr. Woodberry, Bunner, Mrs. Deland, Miss Cone, and Miss Guiney. Finally, we have a section that forms a sort of epilogue, and includes many names of our most recent writers, among them being Mr. Robert Cameron Rogers, Miss Sophie Jewett, Richard Hovey, Mr. Cawein, Miss Aldrich, Mr. E. A. Robinson, Miss Josephine Peabody, and Miss Helen Hay.

It is evident enough that the poetical showing of our first century has little significance from the cosmopolitan point of view, although, as we shall urge a little further on, it has much significance for us as a nation. Let us see how it compares with the showing of the mother-country. The twelve greatest English poets of the same period are Keats, Shelley, Byron, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Landor, Tennyson, Browning, Arnold, Rossetti, Morris, and Mr. Swinburne. The best dozen of our American poets are probably Bryant, Emerson, Holmes, Longfellow, Lowell, Poe,

Whitman, Whittier, Lanier, Taylor, Mr. Aldrich, and Mr. Stedman. There is obviously little room for comparison between the two groups. From the standpoint of disinterested criticism it is hardly too much to say that in absolute value the English group immensely outweighs the American. It would require an excess of patriotic zeal to dispute a conclusion so obvious to the impartial observer. But without blinking this fact, we have no need to hide our diminished heads, for the poets of America have done for us a work which the poets of the mother-country, Shakespeare and all, could not have done for us: they have kept the torch of our national idealism aflame, and have touched our national spirit to issues as fine as any that have engaged the consciousness of the peoples of the Old World. To do these things is the true service of poetry, and, knowing how well our own poets have done them for us, we may take a just pride in their achievements, caring little for comparisons which, in a case like this, must be peculiarly invidious.

When Mr. Stedman reached the conclusion that 'if a native anthology must yield to the foreign one in wealth of choice production, it might

prove to be, from an equally vital point of view, the more significant of the two,' he occupied ground that was less paradoxical than it seemed. The significance of a *corpus* of national song rests not so much upon its absolute artistic value as upon its power to mould the ideals of a people by giving expression to those higher instincts that are always groping toward the light, but that may fail of their purpose when the light is obscured. This Republic was founded upon an idealism finer than any hitherto known in the modern world, and it is to our poets, far more than to our so-called practical men, that we owe the perpetuation of that idealism in our hearts. It is their teaching that has inspired us to hope in our darkest hour; it is a belief in the potency of their messages that still rebukes our wavering faith in so momentous a crisis of our national life as that which we confront in these opening years of the century.

We may well ask, with the editor of the present collection, what constitutes the real significance of the poetry of any nation. Is it 'the essential quality of its material as poetry,' or is it 'its quality as an expression and interpretation of the

time itself"? Mr. Stedman declares for the latter of these alternatives, and urges that view with much logical force.

'Our own poetry excels as a recognizable voice in utterance of the emotions of a people. The storm and stress of youth have been upon us, and the nation has not lacked its lyric cry; meanwhile the typical sentiments of piety, domesticity, freedom, have made our less impassioned verse at least sincere. One who under-rates the significance of our literature, prose or verse, as both the expression and the stimulant of national feeling, as of import in the past and to the future of America, and therefore of the world, is deficient in that critical insight which can judge even of its own day unwarped by personal taste or deference to public impression. He shuts his eyes to the fact that at times, notably throughout the years resulting in the Civil War, this literature has been a "force." Its verse until the dominance of prose fiction—well into the seventies, let us say—formed the staple of current reading; and fortunate it was—while pirated foreign writings, sold cheaply everywhere, handicapped the evolution of a native prose school—that the books of the "elder American poets" lay on the centre-tables of our households, and were read with zest by young and old.'

If our poets have not been great poets in the world sense, they have accomplished great things for our spiritual life, and our feeling toward them is of gratitude and reverence commingled. They

have twined themselves about our affections as no others could have done, and have become associated with our fondest recollections and our deepest aspirations. And our love is bestowed not only upon our Whittier and our Holmes, our Emerson and our Lowell, but also upon those of our lesser singers who have touched some intimate chord of our consciousness and awakened the responsive thrill. Here in this volume are five or six hundred names, and who shall assert that the least of those who bear them has not contributed something of value to the general store, has not proved himself worthy of his race and helpful of its spiritual advancement? What their collective endeavor has meant to us as a nation is beyond the power of words to testify. But it is at least suggested by the felicitous lines in which Mr. Stedman himself describes his vision of 'the constellated matin choir' that 'sang together in the dawn,' and tells us how he

'Heard their stately hymning, saw their light
Resolve in flame that evil long inwrought
With what was else the goodliest domain
Of freedom warded by the ancient sea.'

Those to whom the sweep of that vision has been

revealed can have no misgivings concerning the true worth of American poetry, for their feelings are merged in the one emotion of swelling pride at thought of their share in so noble a national inheritance.

THE FORMULA OF AMERICAN
LITERATURE.

WE recently had occasion to discuss, in the light of Mr. Stedman's 'American Anthology,' the single century of literary activity that has produced practically all the poetry that we cherish as our American national possession. It is to the larger subject of our entire literature, now that three full centuries of its course have been rounded, that attention is directed by the present discussion, for which occasion has been furnished by the appearance of Professor Barrett Wendell's 'Literary History of America.' The plan of the series of literary histories for which this work has been written, and of which it is much the most important volume thus far published, calls for far more than a collection of biographies, bibliographical annals, and critical commentaries. It calls, indeed, for a history no less faithful to the service of Clio than the histories whose titles are modified by no qualifying adjective; but it

calls at the same time for a shifting of the point of view that will bring literature, rather than politics or strategics, into the foreground. Such a treatment of English history has been attempted by the distinguished French scholar, M. Jusserand; such a treatment of American history is now given us by Professor Wendell. It is only when discussed from this standpoint that American literature is given its full significance, for its absolute æsthetic value is not great, relatively speaking, while no value could well be greater than that which it has for the interpretation of the national development, or for the appeal which it makes to the national consciousness.

‘The literary history of America,’ says the author, ‘is the story, under new conditions, of those ideals which a common language has compelled America, almost unawares, to share with England. Elusive though they be, ideals are the souls of the nations which cherish them, — the living spirits which waken nationality into being, and which often preserve its memory long after its life has ebbed away. Denied by the impatience which will not seek them where they smoulder beneath the cinders of cant, derided by

the near-sighted wisdom which is content with the world-old commonplace of how practice must always swerve from precept, they mysteriously, resurgently persist.' The possession of certain ideals in common with the island race from which we have sprung may be taken as the guiding principle of the writer's treatment of American literature. In assuming this basic proposition he plants himself upon solid ground, upon ground far more solid than that of the critic who is ever on the lookout for *differentiæ* instead of devoting his efforts to making clear the underlying unity of all the literature written in the English language. Nationality is far more a matter of language than of race or descent, and 'these languages which we speak grow more deeply than anything else to be a part of our mental habit who use them.' To take a single illustration of this principle, there was never uttered a philosophical truth more profound than that embodied in Wordsworth's familiar lines,

'We must be free or die who speak the tongue
That Shakespeare spake, the faith and morals hold
Which Milton held.'

That is the real secret of English democracy,

and it also offers for the explanation of American democracy a cause far more adequate than any superficial attempt to account for it as resulting from foreign influence.

It is a part of the critic's business, no doubt, to detect *differentiæ* between the varieties of English expression in various lands, and they are not lacking between the literatures of England and America. Each country has its own landscapes, its own trees and flowers and birds, its own historical traditions, and a civilization moulded by its own form and pressure. But it is a mistake to exalt these minor divergences into generic distinctions, for they are much less than that, and serve chiefly to bring into clearer view the ideal community of the two bodies of literature, doing this by the very contrast between their unimportance and the importance of the deep spiritual traits upon which all these differences are the merest surface variations. We may possibly allow the additional drop of nervous fluid which Colonel Higginson claims for the American, but beyond this we may hardly go and remain philosophical of mind.

We have never seen a better statement than

is now given us by Professor Wendell of the indissoluble unity of English and American literary expression. 'The ideals which for three hundred years America and England have cherished, alike yet apart, are ideals of morality and of government — of right and of rights. Whoever has lived his conscious life in the terms of our language, so saturated with the temper and the phrases both of the English Bible and of English Law, has perforce learned that, however he may stray, he cannot escape the duty which bids us do right and maintain our rights. General as these phrases must seem, — common at first glance to the serious moments of all men everywhere, — they have, for us of English-speaking race, a meaning peculiarly our own. Though Englishmen have prated enough and to spare, and though Americans have declaimed about human rights more nebulously still, the rights for which Englishmen and Americans alike have been eager to fight and to die, are no prismatic fancies gleaming through clouds of conflicting logic and metaphor; they are that living body of customs and duties and privileges which a process very like physical growth has made the

vital condition of our national existence. Through immemorial experience, the rights which we most jealously cherish have proved themselves safely favorable at once to prosperity and to righteousness.' It is this twofold idealism, of right and of rights, that has made English literature everywhere essentially the same, and a realization of this truth should rebuke the sectional pride which seeks to make barriers out of trifles, and find radical divergences in the surface-play of expression. It is in this spirit that Professor Wendell has dealt with the three completed centuries of American literature, not minimizing the individual peculiarities of writers or the special characteristics of groups, nor failing to recognize Americanism as a trait where it really exists, but keeping ever in mind the correlations of English and American history, and the fundamental unity of the two peoples as expressed in their institutions, their laws, their social and ethical outlook.

The chief distinction to be drawn between English and American literature is concerned, not with any fundamental difference of temper, but with a difference in the rate of development.

No one can glance over the selections made for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in such a work as Duyckinck, or in the later 'Library' of Mr. Stedman, without being impressed by the fact that the American literary manner was at all times a generation, if not a century, behind the English. This fact has many times been noted, but it has remained for the author of the work now under consideration to place due emphasis upon it, and to give it the prominence it demands in a survey of early American literature. To begin with, he notes the fact that all of the famous first settlers of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay — Bradford, Winthrop, Cotton, Hooker, Richard Mather, Roger Williams, and the rest — were born Elizabethans, although not 'quite the kind of Elizabethans who expressed themselves in poetry.' Now the characteristics of the Elizabethan spirit were these — 'spontaneity, enthusiasm, and versatility,' and if we look aright we shall discover that such were also the characteristics of our own writers of the seventeenth and even the eighteenth century. Taking Cotton Mather as the typical man of letters of the two centuries in

question, the writer boldly testifies to the vitality of his enthusiasm, the spontaneity of his utterance, and his possession of 'just that kind of restless versatility which characterized Elizabethan England and which even to our own day has remained characteristic of New England Yankees.' The New England colonies remained practically uninfluenced by the social and political movements of the mother-country, and 'in history and literature alike, the story of seventeenth-century America is a story of unique national inexperience.' In the century following, came the preaching of Whitefield and the Great Awakening, and when the Revolution was ripe it 'once more brought to the surface of American life the sort of natures whom the Great Awakening shows so fully to have preserved the spontaneity and the enthusiasm of earlier days.' The conclusion of all this argument is expressed by saying that 'the Americans of the Revolutionary period retained to an incalculable degree qualities which had faded from ancestral England with the days of Queen Elizabeth.'

This line of thought may be pursued down into the history of our literature during a con-

siderable part of the century just ending, and it was not until we had a great national experience of our own that we produced a body of literature not closely associated with the earlier types of literature in our ancestral home. Up to the mid-century period, when our literature first allied itself with a burning national issue, and became more distinctly American than it ever could have been before, there continued to be reversions to manners and forms of expression that were long outworn in England. Space forbids us to continue the subject any further, but enough has been said to show how fruitful a formula has been applied by Professor Wendell to the analysis of our literary past. It remains to be added that he has produced the best history of American literature thus far written by anybody, a history that is searching in its method and profound in its judgments, on the one hand, and, on the other, singularly attractive in the manner of its presentation.

A CENTURY OF AMERICAN FICTION.

THE American novel is only one hundred years old. It took the colonists nearly two centuries to free their imagination from the physical and intellectual trammels imposed upon it by the hard necessity of making a virgin world into a habitation fit for man, and the still harder bondage of a theocratic conception of society. As long as the forests remained uncleared and the Indians unsubdued, and as long as men's minds were under the obsession of a grim theology, there was little hope for creative literature, and the writers who put pen to paper were chiefly urged by a desire to take part in some ephemeral controversy of religion or politics, or, at the utmost, by the hope of emulating certain favorite examples of the mother-country's literary product. Thus the best of our early writings were imitative, and imitative our budding literature remained until a time within the memory of many persons now

living. But the publication of Brown's 'Wieland,' in 1798, at least marked the beginning of the end of our long term of sterility, and this is why it becomes appropriate, a hundred years later, to ask what has been accomplished for us by a century of novel-writing.

When we entered upon the first decade of the present century, we had nothing to show in the form of fiction except the earliest of Brown's romances, and two or three such books as Susanna Rowson's 'Charlotte Temple, a Tale of Truth,' whose 'pages were long bedewed with many tears of many readers.' But the novel-reader of these days was not as insatiate in appetite as he has since become, and was well content with Richardson, and Fielding, and Sterne, and Miss Burney, if his taste was of the finer sort; with Walpole, and 'Monk' Lewis, and Ann Radcliffe, if his imagination thirsted for mystery and gloom. He was probably happier with the few books of native origin that he did possess than our latter-day readers, who get more American fiction than they can possibly digest, yet wax indignant because the Great American Novel is so long delayed, and declaim upon the national

folly of our liking all good books in the English language, even if they are written by our kin beyond seas, or translated from the tongues of the stranger.

It may prove interesting to take the present century by decades, and see what each decennial period has done for the development of the art of novel-writing in the United States. We have seen how the account stood in the beginning; what had we to show for ourselves ten years later? It is a question easily answered. There were the rest of Brown's romances, a few such books as Tabitha Tenney's 'Female Quixotism' and Caroline Warren's 'The Gamesters,' and — of greater significance than anything hitherto done in American letters — the book which, although not a novel, was to prove the starting-point of truly native inspiration in fiction, the famous 'History of New York' by one Diedrich Knickerbocker. When another ten years had passed, the pioneer work begun with this delightful piece of quasi-historical and humorous fiction was still further emphasized by the publication of 'The Sketch-Book.' Of the stories included in this volume Professor Richardson justly says:

‘They are local in scene and character, strong in delineation of the personages introduced, and thoroughly artistic in literary form and elaboration. . . . When to novelty in theme and form was added the easy serenity of an assured and confident literary touch, American fiction had clearly passed beyond the stage of apology and curiosity.’

The year 1820 is also noteworthy as the year in which ‘Precaution’ saw the light, and the most important thing to be said about the twenties is that they witnessed the development of Cooper’s activity at the rate of one new novel for almost every year. It was evident that America had at last produced a novelist who had come to stay, and the acclaim with which Cooper was received both at home and abroad made it clear enough that the New World was ready to provide both the occasion and the field, and that men would soon be forthcoming to seize upon the one and cultivate the other. Meanwhile, ‘the obscurest man of letters in America,’ as Hawthorne once styled himself, was slowly passing through the chrysalis stage, and ‘Fanshawe,’ the first of his novels, was actually written during the late

twenties, although the public was to know nothing about it until many years later, when the fame of the author as the greatest of American novelists had become fully assured.

Besides witnessing the continued production of Cooper's novels, the thirties brought into prominence the name of Paulding, the friend and collaborator of Irving, and the one book by that writer which still retains a precarious hold upon life, 'The Dutchman's Fireside,' bears the date of 1831. The year following was the year of 'Swallow Barn,' which marked the beginning of a distinctively Southern variety of the American novel. Kennedy's slender contribution to our fiction falls wholly within this decade, as does also the first instalment of the romantic fiction that was for thirty years to flow in such a stream from the prolific pen of Simms. Nor must we forget to mention the name of Dr. Bird, if it be only to note the fact that the yellow-covered 'dime' novel of a later generation traced its lineage back to 'Nick of the Woods' and 'The Hawks of Hawk Hollow.' From the late thirties date also the popular 'Zenobia' and 'Aurelian' of William Ware, which still find admirers, we

believe, in certain strata of the reading public. When this decade came to its close, the 'Twice-Told Tales,' first collected three years before, had shown the existence of a hitherto unexampled artistic force in American letters, the 'Hyperion' of the year just preceding had given our public a faint but charming reflection of the romantic movement in Germany, while Poe's 'Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque' made the year 1840 a landmark in the history of our fiction.

The fifth decade was distinguished by nothing more noteworthy than Herman Melville's stories of the southern seas, which appeared in rapid succession during these years. But the year that stands midway in the century is doubly significant, for it was in 1850 that Cooper's last novel saw the light, and that 'The Scarlet Letter' — the most perfect piece of creative literature yet produced in the United States — was given to the world. The decade of the fifties was dominated by the genius of Hawthorne, and brought forward only two new names that were destined to outlive their generation. 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' and 'The Virginia Comedians' must be remembered in any survey, however summary,

of our native fiction — the one for its immense social influence, the other for being, on the whole, the best novel produced by the South during the *ante-bellum* period.

The ten years that included the four of the Civil War added several important new names to the annals of our fiction, and are certainly not chargeable with sterility, even if their literary activity did not prove commensurate with the expansion of the national consciousness. The two famous novels of Holmes, the promising tales of Winthrop, the respectable fictions of Bayard Taylor, Dr. Hale's 'Man Without a Country,' Mr. Aldrich's 'Story of a Bad Boy,' and 'The Innocents Abroad' make up a fairly satisfactory list, while the very last year of the decade was that in which 'The Luck of Roaring Camp' took the public by storm, and brought into our fiction a new and resonant note of which the echoes have not yet grown faint.

In all our annals there is probably nothing more significant than the publication of this idyl of the new rough West. It meant, as we can see plainly enough after these thirty years, that our fiction was about to become intensely

local and vividly realistic. The fine flower of ideal literary art had blossomed and died with Hawthorne; henceforth our novelists were to busy themselves with the interpretation of life at close range, and were to produce a kaleidoscopic body of fiction each bit of which should sparkle with its own characteristic and independent color. This is the general formula which enables us to include in one category, no matter how varied the scene and how diverse the accent, the work of Mr. Harte, Mr. Howells, and Mr. James, the novels of Mr. Clemens, Mr. Warner, Mr. Cable, and Mr. James Lane Allen, the countless sketches and social studies of Mr. Eggleston, Dr. Mitchell, Mr. Page, Colonel Johnston, and Major Kirkland, and the charming section of our literature that embraces the writings of Miss Murfree, Miss Wilkins, Miss Jewett, Miss French, and Mrs. Foote. Compared with this list, which might be indefinitely extended with minor yet deserving names, the novelists who have eschewed realism and stood for the old romantic conventions are but a small company, and have done little to check the tidal movement of the period. An entire generation

of novel-readers has found satisfaction in fiction of the descriptive and analytical type, and the inevitable reaction of taste sets in so slowly that, although the signs have been gathering for several years, the changing of the old order has barely begun. Such is the history of American fiction, from the 'Wieland' of 1798 to 'The Crisis,' let us say, of a hundred years later.

THE POETRY OF MR. MOODY.

EVERY two or three years, from some quarter of the critical horizon there issue trumpetings of praise which herald the advent of a new singer of songs. A bright star has swum into the ken of some watcher upon the battlements, and the discovery is proclaimed to the world with much pomp of rhetorical eulogy. The number of new poets who have thus been discovered during the past quarter-century is considerable, but most of them have shared the fate of the *novæ* known to astronomers, and their magnitude has rapidly become dimmed. We have often envied the enthusiasm that could find so much to praise in these new interpreters of nature and human life, but have felt ourselves sorrowfully compelled to stand outside the chorus, and to mar its harmonies by the injection of certain discordant notes of caution and temperate restraint. A book of poetry must exhibit very great qualities indeed to constitute an event in literature, or to set its

writer among the enduring poets of his age. In the memory of men now in their middle or advancing years there have been only two such events in English poetry — the appearance of Mr. Swinburne's 'Poems and Ballads' in 1866 and of the 'Poems' of Rossetti in 1870. Tested by these touchstones, 'The Love Sonnets of Proteus,' and 'The City of Dreadful Night,' the books of Mr. Watson and Mr. Kipling and Mr. Phillips have been phenomena of only secondary significance. Yet the writers of all these books, and other writers as well, have been hailed as new luminaries of the first rank, have been praised in terms that one would hesitate to apply to Arnold or Tennyson, and have been made, as far as indiscriminate eulogy could make them, the literary fashion of their respective hours. Praiseworthy they doubtless are, but not worthy of the sort of praise that has been injudiciously bestowed upon them to the confusion of all absolute values.

In making the following somewhat extended comment upon the poetical work of Mr. William Vaughn Moody, we are not going to say that he is a poet of the highest kind of accomplishment,

or apply to him the language that must properly be reserved for poets whose work has stood the test of time and remained uncorroded by it. But we are going to say — and by our exhibits seek to prove — that no other new poet of the past score of years, either in America or in England, has displayed a finer promise upon the occasion of his first appearance, or has been deserving of more respectful consideration. There is no reason, for example, why his work should attract less attention than has been given of late to the work of Mr. Stephen Phillips, and we make not the slightest doubt that, had his work been the product of an Englishman, its author would have been accorded the resounding praise that has been accorded to the author of ‘Marpessa’ and ‘Paolo and Francesca.’ We wish to say, furthermore, that we have not for many years been so strongly tempted to cast aside critical restraints and indulge in ‘the noble pleasure of praising,’ after the fashion, let us say, of the late Mr. Hutton when dealing with the poetry of Mr. William Watson. Nor do we hesitate to add that, with the possible exception of what has been done by Professor Woodberry, no such note of high and

serious song has been sounded in our recent American poetry as is now sounded in 'The Masque of Judgment' and the 'Poems' of Mr. Moody.

'The Masque of Judgment' is a work that labors under extraordinary difficulties. The form itself is one that a writer must be greatly daring to attempt, and the substance is of a sort that heightens the difficulties of the form. Like the epics of Dante and Milton, it is concerned with no less a theme than the cosmogony; like 'Faust,' it sets speech upon the lips of archangels; like the 'Prometheus Unbound,' it personifies the creations of mythology. It might more fittingly be styled a Mystery than a Masque, but it cannot take an easy refuge in the *naïvetés* of mediævalism, for it is no imitative exercise in archaism, but a poem conceived in the spirit of modern philosophy. So true is this that we are impelled to provide it with texts from the writings of the philosophers. Professor Royce says: 'It is the fate of life to be restless, capricious, and therefore tragic. Happiness comes, indeed, but by all sorts of accidents; and it flies as it comes. One thing only that is greater than this

fate endures in us if we are wise of heart ; and this one thing endures forever in the heart of the great World-Spirit of whose wisdom ours is but a fragmentary reflection. This one thing, as I hold, is the eternal resolution that if the world *will* be tragic, it *shall* still, in Satan's despite, be spiritual. And this resolution is, I think, the very essence of the Spirit's own eternal joy.' And Professor James, writing in much the same spirit, says : ' God himself, in short, may draw vital strength and increase of very being from our fidelity. For my own part, I do not know what the sweat and blood and tragedy of this life mean, if they mean anything short of this.' On the lips of Mr. Moody's Raphael, the arch-angelic lover of mankind, this philosophy is given melodious utterance.

- ' Darkly, but oh, for good, for good,
The spirit infinite
Was throned upon the perishable blood;
To moan and to be abject at the neap,
To ride portentous on the shrieking scud
Of the aroused flood,
And halcyon hours to preen and prate in the boon
Tropical afternoon.
- ' Not in vain, not in vain,
The spirit hath its sanguine stain,

And from its senses five doth peer
As a fawn from the green windows of a wood;
Slave of the panic woodland fear,
Boon-fellow in the game of blood and lust
That fills with tragic mirth the woodland year;
Searched with starry agonies
Through the breast and through the reins,
Maddened and led by lone moon-wandering cries.
Dust unto dust complains,
Dust laugheth out to dust,
Sod unto sod moves fellowship,
And the soul utters, as she must,
Her meanings with a loose and carnal lip;
But deep in her ambiguous eyes
Forever shine and slip
Quenchless expectancies,
And in a far-off day she seems to put her trust.'

Again, and in still clearer language, the archangel declares the glory of man's passionate self-contradictions :

'I have walked
The rings of planets where strange-colored moons
Hung thick as dew, in ocean orchards feared
The glaucous tremble of the living boughs
Whose fruit hath life and purpose; but nowhere
Found any law but this: Passion is power,
And, kindly tempered, saves. All things declare
Struggle hath deeper peace than sleep can bring:
The restlessness that put creation forth
Impure and violent, held holier calm
Than that Nirvana whence it wakened Him.'

Thus the way is prepared for the Divine Tragedy. God, having created the race of men, and having sought to save man from himself by the mystery of the Incarnation, determines at last to destroy the impious brood.

‘What if they rendered up their wills to His?
Hushed and subdued their personality?
Became as members of the living tree?’

To Raphael thus musing, the Angel of the Pale Horse makes reply :

‘A whisper grows, various from tongue to tongue,
That so He will attempt. Those who consent
To render up their clamorous wills to Him,
To merge their fretful being in His peace
He will accept: the rest he will destroy.’

In the fulness of time, the Day of Judgment dawns, and ‘God’s vengeance is full wrought’ upon the wicked. The following wonderful lyric is sung by the redeemed spirits on their upward flight :

‘In the wilds of life astray,
Held far from our delight,
Following the cloud by day
And the fire by night,
Came we a desert way.
O Lord, with apples feed us,
With flagons stay!
By Thy still waters lead us!

‘ As bird torn from the breast
Of mother-cherishings,
Far from the swaying nest
Dies for the mother wings,
So did the birth-hour wrest
From Thy sweet will and word
Our souls distressed.
Open Thy breast, thou Bird!’

Yet Raphael, who alone of the celestial hosts has understood the heart of man, and whose imagination has foreshadowed the consequences of his destruction, remains disconsolate.

‘ Never again! never again for me!
Never again the lily souls that live
Along the margin of the streams, shall grow
More candid at my coming. Never more
God’s birds above the bearers of the Ark
Shall make a wood of implicated wings,
Swept by the wind of slow ecstatic song.
Thy youths shall hold their summer cenacles;
I am not of their fellowship, it seems.
God’s ancient peace shall feed them, as it feeds
These yet uplifted hills. I would I knew
Where bubbled that insistent spring. To drink
Deep, and forget what I have seen to-day.’

But the destruction of mankind is only the beginning of the Tragedy. When that awful fiat went forth, God likewise accomplished His own doom. To be dethroned and destroyed by

the forces of His own creation is the fate that awaits Him, as it awaited the God of Scandinavian myth in the day of Ragnarök, as it awaited the God of Greek myth in Shelley's treatment of the tale of Prometheus. The instrument of His undoing is the Worm that dieth not, His own monstrous miscreation, who, having swept mankind from the face of earth at the behest of his Creator, mounts upward to commit violent assault upon the hosts of Heaven.

‘He mounts!

He lays his length upward the visioned hills,
The inviolable fundaments of Heaven!
There where he climbs the kindled slopes grow pale,
Ashen the amethystine dells, and dim
The starry reaches.’

The closing scene between the Spirits of the Lamps about the Throne, who have fled in terror from the terrific struggle, and the Archangels Raphael and Uriel, rises to a height of imaginative sublimity that leaves us fairly stricken with awe.

‘URIEL (approaching).

The dream is done! Petal by petal falls
The coronal of creasured bloom God wove
To deck His brows at dawn.

RAPHAEL.

No hope remains?

URIEL.

To save Him from Himself not cherubim
Nor seraphim avail. Who loves not life
Receiveth not life's gifts at any hand.

.

RAPHAEL.

Would He had dared
To nerve each member of His mighty frame —
Man, beast, and tree, and all the shapes of will
That dream their darling ends in clod and star —
To everlasting conflict, wringing peace.
From struggle, and from struggle peace again,
Higher and sweeter and more passionate
With every danger passed! Would He had spared
That dark Antagonist whose enmity
Gave Him rejoicing sinews, for of Him
His foe was flesh of flesh and bone of bone.
With suicidal hand He smote him down,
And now indeed His lethal pangs begin.

FIRST LAMP (to URIEL).

Brother, what lies beyond this trouble? Death?

URIEL.

All live in Him, with Him shall all things die.

SECOND LAMP.

And the snake reign, coiled on the holy hill?

URIEL.

Sorrow dies with the heart it feeds upon.

RAPHAEL.

Look, where the red volcano of the fight
Hath burst, and down the violated hills

Pours ruin and repulse, a thousand streams
Choked with the pomp and furniture of Heaven.
In vain the Lion ramps against the tide,
In vain from slope to slope the giant Wraths
Rally but to be broken. Dwindling dim
Across the blackened pampas of the wind
The routed Horses flee with hoof and wing,
Till their trine light is one, and now is quenched.

URIEL.

The spirits fugitive from Heaven's brink
Put off their substance of ethereal fire
And mourn phantasmal on the phantom Alps.

FOURTH LAMP.

Mourn, sisters ! For our light is fading too.
Thou of the topaz heart, thou of the jade,
And thou sweet trembling opal — ye are grown
Gray things, and aged as God's sorrowing eyes.

FIRST LAMP.

My wick burns blue and dim.

SECOND LAMP.

My oil is spent.

RAPHAEL.

The moon smoulders ; and naked from their seats
The stars arise with lifted hands, and wait.'

We have endeavored to give, in the preceding analysis, some idea of the fashion in which Mr. Moody has dealt with his grandiose conception of the Creation, the Christian Mystery, and the Judgment. He has shown it possible to make in

our own day a very noble poem, as Milton did, out of the Biblical mythology, and as Shelley did, out of the most subtle spiritual symbolism. The poem is not without minor faults, and criticism of the microscopic sort might easily detect flaws here and there, words inaccurately used or inadequate as vehicles of their intention, forced imagery and moments of flagging imagination. We are content to leave to others this thankless task, feeling that the superb merits of the work make its occasional crudities quite insignificant. We have quoted many of its finest passages, but have reserved for the last the finest of them all — this glorious apostrophe to mankind :

‘O Dreamer! O Desirer! Goer down
Unto untravelled seas in untried ships!
O crusher of the unimagined grape
On unconceivèd lips!
O player upon a lordly instrument
No man or god hath had in mind to invent;
O cunning how to shape
Effulgent Heaven and scoop out bitter Hell
From the little shine and saltness of a tear;
Sieger and harrier,
Beyond the moon, of thine own builded town,
Each morning won, each eve impregnable,
Each noon evanished sheer!’

We should not know where in recent poetry to look for the match to this melodious and sympathetic portrayal of 'life's wild and various bloom' of passion and aspiration, of alternating defeat and victory, of the commingling of sense and spirit that makes of our existence so confused a web of self-contradictions, yet somehow suggests a harmony of design that must be apparent to the transcendental vision.

It is clear that the poet of 'The Masque of Judgment' is no partisan of the ascetic ideal. His plea is for the richness of life, for the legitimate claims of sense no less than of spirit, for the working out of one's salvation by means that leave no human instinct athirst. Nor is his ideal one for the few favored by nature or circumstance; it is rather the all-embracing expression of a fine trust in the whole of human nature. This democratic outlook, which is somewhat obscured by the symbolism demanded for the dramatic work we have just had under discussion, is given a more definite expression in the volume of the 'Poems,' to which we now turn. We find it in 'Gloucester Moors,' with which the book

opens, a striking poem which likens the earth to a ship bound with its freight of souls for some unknown port.

‘But thou, vast outbound ship of souls,
What harbor town for thee ?
What shapes, when thy arriving tolls,
Shall crowd the banks to see ?
Shall all the happy shipmates then
Stand singing brotherly ?
Or shall a haggard ruthless few
Warp her over and bring her to,
While the many broken souls of men
Fester down in the slaver’s pen,
And nothing to say or do ?’

It takes a robust optimism to bear up under the spectacle afforded by the darker aspects of human life, its physical failings and its spiritual agonies, and the mood of ‘A Gray Day’ holds the poet under its obsession more than once.

‘I wonder how that merchant’s crew
Have ever found the will!
I wonder what the fishers do
To keep them toiling still!
I wonder how the heart of man
Has patience to live out its span,
Or wait until its dreams come true.’

But this mood is not lasting, nor does it insistently prevail in the writer’s consciousness.

Whatever the defeats life may bring, the strong spirit will not be cowed, nor will it seek a refuge in quietism. Some stanzas written 'At Assisi' give us a clear statement of the poet's philosophy.

'I turn away from the gray church pile;
I dare not enter, thus undone:
Here in the roadside grass awhile
I will lie and watch for the sun.
Too purged of earth's good glee and strife,
Too drained of the honeyed lusts of life,
Was the peace these old saints won!

St. Francis sleeps upon his hill,
And a poppy flower laughs down his creed;
Triumphant light her petals spill,
His shrines are dim indeed.
Men build and build, but the soul of man,
Coming with haughty eyes to scan,
Feels richer, wilder need.

'How long, old builder Time, wilt bide
Till at thy thrilling word
Life's crimson pride shall have to bride
The spirit's white accord,
Within that gate of good estate
Which thou must build us soon or late,
Hoar workman of the Lord?'

There is not a poem among the score or more contained in Mr. Moody's volume that is commonplace or devoid of some arresting quality of

imagery or emotion. Regretfully passing by the greater number of them, we reserve our remaining space for the two pieces inspired by the dark page of recent American history. Our broken national faith, our lust of dominion, the subordination of morality to greed in our international dealings, and our desertion of the principles upon which our greatness as a people has hitherto been based,—these are things that have made the last three years a period of inexpressible sadness to Americans who have been taught to cherish the teachings of Washington and Jefferson, of Sumner and Lincoln. How we have longed for the indignant words of protest that our Whittier or our Emerson or our Lowell would have voiced had their lives reached down to this unhappy time! But in reading Mr. Moody's 'Ode in Time of Hesitation' and his lines 'On a Soldier Fallen in the Philippines' we are almost consoled for the silence of the prophet-voices that appealed so powerfully to the moral consciousness of the generation before our own. We seem to catch the very accent of Lowell's patriotic fervor in these lines suggested by the Shaw Memorial:

‘Crouched in the sea-fog on the moaning sand
 All night he lay, speaking some simple word
 From hour to hour to the slow minds that heard,
 Holding each poor life gently in his hand
 And breathing on the base rejected clay
 Till each dark face shone mystical and grand
 Against the breaking day;
 And lo, the shard the potter cast away
 Was grown a fiery chalice crystal-fine
 Fulfilled of the divine
 Great wine of battle wrath by God’s ring-finger stirred.
 Then upward, where the shadowy bastion loomed
 Huge on the mountain in the wet sea light
 Whence now, and now, infernal flowerage bloomed,
 Bloomed, burst, and scattered down its deadly seed, —
 They swept, and died like freemen on the height,
 Like freemen, and like men of noble breed.’

Contrast this bright picture of heroic devotion to a great cause with the dark picture presented by the successors of these men now engaged in the bloody subjugation of an alien people who have done naught to offend us, and whose crime is that they love their country well enough to die by thousands for its sake.

‘I will not and I dare not yet believe!
 Though furtively the sunlight seems to grieve,
 And the spring-laden breeze
 Out of the gladdening west is sinister

With sounds of nameless battle over seas;
Though when we turn and question in suspense
If these things be indeed after these ways,
And what things are to follow after these,
Our fluent men of place and consequence
Fumble and fill their mouths with hollow phrase,
Or for the end-all of deep arguments
Intone their dull commercial liturgies—
I dare not yet believe! My ears are shut!
I will not hear the thin satiric praise
And muffled laughter of our enemies,
Bidding us never sheathe our valiant sword
Till we have changed our birthright for a gourd
Of wild pulse stolen from a barbarian's hut,
Showing how wise it is to cast away
The symbols of our spiritual sway,
That so our hands with better ease
May wield the driver's whip and grasp the jailer's keys.'

By the memory of the fine altruistic impulse
that stirred our national heart when the suffering
Cubans besought us for aid, let it not be said of
us that a mean motive underlay that frank out-
burst of active sympathy, that our protestations
of unselfishness were the merest hypocrisy, and
that our soldiers have given up their lives that
their country might be dishonored.

'We charge you, ye who lead us,
Breathe on their chivalry no hint of stain!
Turn not their new-world victories to gain!

One least leaf plucked for chaffer from the bays
Of their dear praise,
One jot of their pure conquest put to hire,
The implacable republic will require.

For save we let the island men go free,
Those baffled and dislaurelled ghosts
Will curse us from the lamentable coasts
Where walk the frustrate dead.
The cup of trembling shall be drainèd quite,
Eaten the sour bread of astonishment,
With ashes of the hearth shall be made white
Our hair, and wailing shall be in the tent.'

This impressive adjuration is supplemented by the lines suggested by the death of General Lawton.

'A flag for the soldier's bier
Who dies that his land may live;
O, banners, banners here,
That we doubt not nor misgive !
That he heed not from the tomb
The evil days draw near
When the nation, robed in gloom,
With its faithless past shall strive.

Let him never dream that his bullet's scream went wide
of its island mark,
Home to the heart of his darling land where she stumbled
and sinned in the dark.'

When our nation shall have won back its sanity,
and once more learned to heed — although at

what cost we tremble to think — the lessons of righteousness taught us by the Fathers of the Republic, these poems will seem as stars seen through the angry cloud-rifts of a tempestuous night, bearing shining witness to the fact that in our hour of darkness there were some souls that held the faith undaunted by all the powers of evil leagued against them. We are somehow reminded of an eloquent similitude employed by the late Frederic Myers. Speaking of the judgment of the men to come upon still another poet who, like Mr. Moody, would not despair of a seemingly hopeless cause, he said: ‘They will look back on him as Romans looked back on that unshaken Roman who purchased at its full price the field of Cannæ, on which at that hour victorious Hannibal lay encamped with his Carthaginian host.’

EDUCATION

THE TEACHER AS AN INDIVIDUAL.

THOSE with whom biography, and particularly autobiography, is a favorite form of reading, often have occasion to note the influence exerted by teachers of strong personality upon men who have afterwards attained sufficient distinction to make the story of their lives worth reading about. The literature of autobiography is full of tributes — appreciative, affectionate, grateful, and reverent — to the memory of the men who, at the impressionable age of the writers' lives, gave to them the bent that was to remain characteristic, inculcated the ideals of learning or of conduct that were thereafter to be pursued. The affection of Marcus Aurelius for Fronto, of Xenophon and Plato for Socrates, are classical instances that at once rise in the memory. The tribute of the Florentine to his teacher, met upon the Fiery Plain of the Seventh Circle, and reminded of

‘La cara e buona imagine paterna
Di voi, quando nel mondo ad ora ad ora
M’insegnavate come l’uom s’eterna,’

has been repeated, with every possible shade of tender expression, by all sorts and conditions of men of the modern world, down to the pupils of Arnold at Rugby, and of other teachers of our own day. The name of many a faithful teacher has been rescued from the oblivion that else awaited it by some such tribute as that of Dante to Brunetto, uttered by some voice that has compelled the world's attention, and many a reader of such utterances has felt a responsive thrill of gratitude as he has recalled the devoted ministrations and sympathetic guidance of some teacher of his own youth.

It is to be noted that in nearly all cases of the class now under discussion, the teacher is remembered as an individual, a distinctly-marked character, a personal influence for good; rarely, if ever, as the representative of a system or the exponent of a method. Stress is laid upon the fruitful contact of soul with soul, not upon the workings of the educational machinery, however nice the adjustment of its parts. Nor is the teacher thus held in grateful remembrance because of his success in cramming the student with facts, or because of his skill as a disciplina-

rian. Success of this sort may be accounted highly by administrative educational bodies, but is as nothing in the afterglow of the student's recollection, unless associated with success of a very different kind. It is wisdom rather than knowledge, sympathetic insight rather than mere strength of will, that makes upon the student a lasting impression, and leaves him with an abiding sense of deep obligation to his mentor. However completely a teacher may achieve the lower aims of educational work, — the aims that are tested by examinations, and theses, and the observation of official visitors, — a student will feel but slight personal indebtedness if the higher aims have not at the same time been sought after with equal strenuousness. It is in the realization of these higher aims that the pith of the matter is found, and school inspectors (unless they be men of the Matthew Arnold type) can know next to nothing of the degree to which they have been realized.

Many wise writers upon education have sought to set forth the really vital aims of the art pedagogic; none, perhaps, more successfully than Mr. John Morley. He says:

‘There appear to be three dominant states of mind, with groups of faculties associated with each of them, which it is the business of the instructor firmly to establish in the character of the future man. The first is a resolute and unflinching respect for Truth; for the conclusions, that is to say, of the scientific reason, comprehending also a constant anxiety to take all possible pains that such conclusions shall be rightly drawn. Connected with this is the discipline of the whole range of intellectual faculties, from the simple habit of correct observation, down to the highly complex habit of weighing and testing the value of evidence. The second fundamental state in a rightly formed character is a deep feeling for things of the spirit which are unknown and immeasurable; a sense of awe, mystery, sublimity, and the fateful bounds of life at its beginning and its end. The third state, which is at least as difficult to bring to healthy perfection as either of the other two, is a passion for Justice.’

Here is a programme indeed, one not embodied in any official document, and quite irreducible to the neat formulas of methodology, yet more or less distinctly present in the consciousness of every true educator, and the object of his most earnest desire. Such were the aims of Socrates, as far as we may disentangle them from the iridescent web of Platonic expression; such have been the aims of the inspired teachers of all generations since.

What, it may well be asked, is the bearing of these extremely abstract considerations upon the actual problems of the present educational day? To us the reply seems very obvious. Such aims as we believe to be the most essential of all in education are not easy of attainment at best, and whatever tends to repress the individuality of the teacher tends also to make impossible the attainment of these aims. Most teachers, in most civilized countries to-day, are so cabined, cribbed, and confined, by administrative prescription, that they are not free to be individuals at all; they are only cog-wheels in the machinery. What we are sometimes tempted to call the curse of centralization has so fallen upon most of our educational organizations that the very word 'system' has come to have the connotations of lifelessness, and inadequacy, and dull uniformity. The higher education has generally learned the lesson that system, although an excellent servant, is a poor master, but the lower education everywhere calls loudly for emancipation. The teacher in a German *Gymnasium*, a French *lycée*, an English board school, or the school of an American city, is so hampered by needless regulations and require-

ments, by the drudgery of unnecessary bookkeeping and prescribed written work, by the exigencies of over-detailed courses of instruction and ill-chosen text-books — to say nothing of the negative embarrassment resulting from a sadly deficient school equipment — that he becomes utterly disheartened at the thought of doing good work under so great a variety of adverse conditions, and can only resign himself to his fate.

Take the matter of text-books alone: a text-book is a tool, and its chief excellence is in being fitted to the hand that must use it. There is no more reason why a teacher should have forced upon him a text-book that he does not like than there is for denying a cabinet-maker the right to select his own tools. It is irrationally urged that a school system must be based upon the use of uniform school manuals; whereas uniformity in such a matter is not even desirable, let alone being necessary. In our own country, we act for the most part upon the crude theory that administrative boards may properly select the text-books to be used by teachers, and the patent evils for which this notion is responsible are counted as nothing in comparison with the bles-

sings of uniformity. The simple truth is that uniformity in this and many similar matters is the veriest bugbear, and that what is needed more than anything else is the reduction of prescriptive uniformity to the barest minimum. In fact, the attitude of the educator toward this subject should be that every sort of uniform regulation must give indubitable proof of its necessity before it has any right to exist; the prevalent attitude being, we need hardly say, that the presumption is in favor of the uniform rule. Local option is as essential to educational as to political vitality, and it should be extended not merely to every school, but to every individual teacher, in every case possible.

The urgent plea, heard at all educational gatherings, and voiced in all educational journals, that we need better teachers in our schools, is doubtless the one to be kept most prominent in current discussions, and can hardly be repeated too persistently. But when the question of ways and means comes up, there are opportunities for a wide divergence of opinion. What we most need is pedagogical training, says one; another rides the hobby of increased superintendence; a

third finds in higher salaries and permanent tenure a sovereign remedy for the evil of inefficient teaching. All these opinions have their weight ; and, doubtless, our teachers would be better as a class if more of them were first professionally trained, then wisely guided during the early years of their work, and all the time assured of advancement in proportion to the development of their ability, and of a compensation befitting the high character of their calling, and the social status which should of right be theirs. But, excellent as all these things are, we venture to think a still worthier aim that of making the profession of teaching attractive by making it one that may be pursued without the loss of self-respect. We do not get the best kind of men and women in our schoolrooms, mainly because we make it only too evident that we do not want them. The kind of person who ought to be there is the kind of person who is not likely to be willing to submit to the petty regulations with which most of our teachers are hedged about. Too many of our public school systems have as their basis distrust of the teacher's ability, and even of his honesty. Then, when it is suggested that such

and such matters may very suitably be left to the discretion of the individual teacher, we are informed that he cannot be trusted to deal properly with them. There never was a more vicious circle of reasoning. The formula seems to be : first, to eliminate from the schools all persons likely to have and to exercise good individual judgment ; second, to complain that those who are left cannot be trusted to think for themselves, but must have their work laid out for them on the most rigid lines. We firmly believe that this deliberate suppression of the teacher's individuality is one of the greatest evils that now exist in our public education, and that it offers a field for the reformer quite as promising as that which is offered by the question of superintendence, the question of professional training, or the question of compensation and tenure.

THE COMMENCEMENT SEASON.

IN the early summer of every year there comes a time when schools and colleges all over the country are engaged in closing up their work, and in dismissing into the world of action the thousands of young men and women who have, as the phrase goes, completed their education. They are, for the most part, a hopeful body of young people, and those who witness the final flourish of the exercises which mark for these graduates the 'commencement' of their influence upon a wider world than that of their Alma Mater must be cynical indeed if they do not find this spirit of hopefulness contagious. When should we take hope for the future, if not in the presence of these young and eager minds, conscious of their rich inheritance from the past, and confident of their power to recast the future into their own glowing mould? However our own generation may have disappointed us, we still have faith in the generation that is to come

after us, and deep down in most of our hearts there is an invincible belief that somehow, somewhere, the ideals that have been thwarted in our own time by the brute forces of selfishness and materialism are destined to have a better chance of realization in the near future. If our own mood have become that of the 'Locksley Hall' of the poet's ripe age, we would not have it shared by the younger generation, and are glad that the mood which inspired the earlier 'Locksley Hall' still invades the ardent imaginings of youth, and shapes them to the same fair dream.

It is not alone because of the hope that springs eternal that we who have suffered the disillusionment of advancing years still cling to a belief in the promise and the potency of the youth that is just taking the world's burden upon its shoulders. We are not altogether without rational grounds for that belief. It is to the progress of education that we must look for the accomplishment of all those things which are not, yet which ought to be, and no one can follow the educational developments of recent years without taking heart for the race, or without anticipating a marked practical outcome from so great an amount of intelli-

gent and harmoniously concerted effort. Whether we examine the bare statistics, with their showing of increased educational opportunities, of a better appreciation of the meaning of education, of the strong hold of humanism upon our systems despite the assaults made upon it in the name of practicality, or whether we attend to the philosophical generalizations of those observers who, from year to year, survey the field of recent activity and sum up the results accomplished, we are not without abundant cause for encouragement and self-gratulation. That much has been done, and done in the right way, is undeniable; we have many reasons to believe that the young of to-day are given a better equipment with which to face the world than was provided for the young of twenty or thirty years ago.

And yet, with all the obvious reasons for our feeling satisfied with what the educational activity of the present time is accomplishing, we must reckon with the fact that some of the prevailing tendencies of educational thought are viewed with mistrust, and even with alarm, by many of the best observers, by profound and weighty thinkers whose views command the greatest

respect. Amid the clamor of pedagogical novelty and radicalism the still small voice of these protestants penetrates to the attentive ear, and bids us reëxamine the fundamental articles of the current orthodoxy. One such voice is that of Professor Münsterberg, and it deserves very close consideration. Let us take the case of the average graduate from the school or college of to-day. Comparing him with the graduate of a generation ago, we may admit at once that he has been in the hands of instructors of more accurate scholarship, that he has had better library and laboratory aids, that more helpful text-books have guided his studies. These things are all good, but they are not fundamental. What is really fundamental is, for example, what Professor Münsterberg, writing of the tendency to allow young people to select the subjects which are the most interesting, expresses in the following terms: 'A child who has himself the right of choice, or who sees that parents and teachers select the courses according to his tastes and inclinations, may learn a thousand pretty things, but never the one which is the greatest of all: to do his duty. He who is allowed always to follow the paths of least

resistance never develops the power to overcome resistance; he remains utterly unprepared for life. To do what we like to do, — that needs no pedagogical encouragement; water always runs down hill. Our whole public and social life shows the working of this impulse, and our institutions outbid one another in catering to the taste of the public. The school alone has the power to develop the opposite tendency, to encourage and train the belief in duties and obligations, to inspire devotion to better things than those to which we are drawn by our lower instincts.' For a student to choose his own courses may make his education both easy and pleasant; it certainly does not develop the power to overcome resistance. That power is developed only by work that is not easy, and that sometimes is extremely unpleasant. 'The schools were bad, and the public was dissatisfied,' says our writer; 'now the elective studies relieve the discomfort of the children; in the place of the old vexation they have a good time, and the parents are glad that the drudgery is over.' Presently, however, there is a rude awakening, and it is discovered that the children thus taught

have acquired no mental stamina, that they do not know anything thoroughly, that they cannot grapple with any hard problem of practical life. Then the man who is strong on psychology and pedagogy gets his chance. For the possession of this apparatus 'he is not a better teacher, but he can talk about the purposes of the new education till all is covered by beautiful words; and thus parents and children are happily satisfied for a while, till the time comes when the nation has to pay for its neglect.' 'Just as it has been said that war needs three things, money, money, and again money, so it can be said with much greater truth that education needs, not forces and buildings, not pedagogy and demonstrations, but only men, men, and again men. . . . The right kind of men is what the schools need.'

One of the dialogues of Lucian speaks — we quote from Froude's paraphrase — of 'lies related so circumstantially and by such grave authorities, with evidence of eye-witnesses, place, and time all accurately given, that the strongest mind could hardly resist conviction unless fortified with the certainty that such things could not be.' Our credulous age is beset by innumerable lies

of this character, lies of popular science, of political controversy, of religious propaganda, of every species of intellectual quackery. It is surely both fundamental and vital to ask of our education whether it fortifies the mind with the certainty that such things cannot be. Does the average product of our most approved educational systems know the demonstrated facts of physics, of economic science, of the historical experience of mankind, with absolute conviction, or does he stand toward them in a hazy mental attitude, doubtful of their validity, and ready to surrender them at the behest of some plausible word-monger? This attitude toward fundamental principles is so widely prevalent, even among people who have gone through the form of intellectual training, that the answer to our question does little credit to whatever agencies are responsible for such an intellectual outlook. For a period that boasts of enlightenment, the 'forts of folly' are still defended by forces whose numbers are, to say the least, disheartening. Both intellectually and morally, the educational methods most in vogue in the schools of to-day, in spite of all the zeal and energy behind them, seem somehow

to fail when we look below the surface of their results. The sterner if less ingenious methods of the past did succeed in evolving that type of 'gentleman and scholar' which seems to be fast disappearing, and the passing of which from our life has been lamented by Professor Emerton. The personal influence of the teacher has become lessened, and the pressure of the educational machinery has become greater. And there is much food for reflection in these words of the writer just mentioned: 'The highly developed machine is able by its very perfection to give to comparatively poor material an apparent finish, which may deceive the unwary. . . . Our machinery will enable us to turn out men trained to certain definable forms of mental activity, men who can be ticketed off in groups and applied in various kinds of work in the world. It will never give us any guaranty that these are men of real intellectual power, whose personal quality can of itself command respect.' How far our insistence upon the machine-made quality may go is illustrated by the growing tendency among educational administrators to recruit their forces only from the ranks of men having the profes-

sional trade-mark. Professor Emerton makes this pertinent quotation from Erasmus: 'Formerly a man was called "doctor" because he was a learned man; but nowadays no one will believe a man is learned unless he is called "doctor."' And the writer adds, in words that are none too strong, this statement of his own experience: 'I have known many a man, whose great fundamental need was intellectual refinement and culture, sacrificed to this semi-civilized demand for a certifiable kind of expert training.' The educational tendency which can be content thus to substitute a narrow and easy test of ability for those broad and searching tests which alone are of real value, is not exactly a cause for congratulation. Here also a fundamental principle is involved, and we should look to it that the tendency be not suffered to impair our education in a very vital respect. The above are a few only of the reflections that must intrude upon serious minds whenever educational questions come to the front, and that cannot fail to exert a sobering influence upon our enthusiasm.

BOYS AND GIRLS AND BOOKS.

THE curse (we use the word deliberately) which at present rests upon the teaching of English literature in our elementary and secondary schools is the imposition upon young people of *a priori* programmes. We try to inculcate a love of literature by making boys and girls read books that they do not like, simply because in our Olympian opinion, and from our superior point of view, they ought to like them. The result is the natural one that a large proportion of our grammar and high-school children learn to hate the very name of literature, and by our injudicious treatment are cut off (many of them for good) from one of the chief joys of life. And yet, nearly all of them have their literary interests, have somewhere in their mental make-up the germs of good taste. Any intelligent teacher, free to deal with the problem presented by a particular individual or even a particular class of students, can get at these interests and develop these germs. But this

necessary freedom in diagnosis and treatment is denied to most teachers by the stupidity of the authorities placed over them, and they are condemned to the hopeless task of working within the rigid limits of prescribed texts and courses. The colleges, for example, announce that they will examine candidates in certain texts, and the consequence of this announcement is that thousands of hapless young students (to take two peculiarly flagrant cases of recent years) are set to studying Defoe's 'History of the Plague' and Burke's speech on 'Conciliation.' Small wonder if, under these circumstances, the study of literature itself becomes a plague, because absolutely devoid of the sort of 'conciliation' that is really needed. And if undue deference is not paid to the requirements of the colleges, there is never any lack of doctrinaires among superintendents and committeemen to devise programmes that are equally well calculated to destroy the nascent liking for literature that is the normal possession of healthy young minds.

This way of dealing with the most sacred interests of children is educational quackery and nothing else, whether it proceed from autocratic

individuals or from bodies of educators in solemn conclave. It is the proprietary-medicine principle applied to the treatment of the mind. The fatuousness of prescribing certain texts to be studied by children in certain stages of their education is so amazing that words are inadequate to deal with it. That one man's meat is another man's poison is a statement as true in psychology as it is in physiology. Imagine a body of representative physicians meeting for the purpose of preparing a course of drugs to be administered uniformly to young people of certain ages. At fifteen, let us say, they should take calomel for so many months, quinine for so many others, and thus throughout the whole period of development. The illustration is grotesque, no doubt, yet it offers a fair parallel to the methods of many educators when dealing with this delicate question of literary instruction. Mr. Ruskin once described himself as 'a violent Tory,' and the contemplation of such methods as these should be enough to make 'a violent Individualist' of everyone having a proper appreciation of the aims to be kept in view by the teacher of literature. 'Chaos is come again' would doubtless be the cry of the

partisans of routine should their precious schemes be roughly set aside in the interests of the individual student. But in pedagogy, at least, there is one thing worse than chaos, and that thing is the sort of regimentation toward which so much of our modern education tends.

We are impelled to these observations by the examination of a small book called 'An Introduction to the Study of Literature,' compiled by Dr. Edwin Herbert Lewis. It is a book of detached pieces, about one hundred and fifty in all, and, as we look it over, our first impression is that it offers one more incentive to that 'reading by sample' against which Mr. Pancoast has protested so effectively in 'The Educational Review.' A further examination, disclosing such juxtapositions as William Cullen Bryant and Mrs. Charlotte Perkins Stetson, Walt Whitman and Mr. William Canton, Shakespeare on 'the fop' and Cardinal Newman on 'the gentleman,' gives the impression that we are plunging into a sort of literary grab-bag, and curiosity as to what will come out next becomes the predominant element in the consciousness. But our thoughts take a more serious turn when we seek in the preface

of the book to discover the principle upon which it has been put together. It then appears in its true light as an attempt (the first of its sort that has come to our knowledge) to place before young people the kind of literature that they really like instead of the kind that their elders think they ought to like. The book is based upon actual experiment rather than upon *a priori* reasoning; each selection is the result of an induction from many observations rather than of a deduction from any pedantic principle. But in this matter Dr. Lewis must speak for himself.

First of all, he tells us that the appeal of literature should be made to the 'highest normal interests' of the student. Then, 'it must be ascertained by what stages the imagination, the emotions, and the character develop. Theoretically, there is a masterpiece for every month of the student's life. The surest way of learning where the masterpieces fit is to allow the student to "browse" in a library.' The following passage describes the method which has resulted in the volume now under consideration.

'Various classes in the Lewis Institute have been encouraged to "browse," to see if they might not hit upon

a body of literature that would remain a constant interest to their equals in age. However imperfect and incomplete these investigations, the sifting process, upon which the students entered actively and honestly, has been of the greatest value to all concerned. It has shown that noticeable differences of interest exist between ninth and tenth, tenth and eleventh grades. In the nature-sense, for instance, as it appears in the youth not hopelessly hardened by "business" aims, there are usually marked changes between thirteen and sixteen. The change is first from the child's scientific curiosity about nature to a half-poetic, but objective, interest in her; the boy becomes capable of direct, unreflecting joy in nature, or even of direct displeasure with her, in something of the Homeric manner; then he slowly grows to sympathize with the modern view, so much more imaginative and sometimes so much less wholesome than Homer's.'

That the method thus outlined is the only rational one for the teaching of literature to young students seems to us beyond question. It makes the work attractive rather than forbidding. It coaxes the recalcitrant tastes and emotions instead of domineering over them. It prepares the way for that systematic study of literary history and æsthetics that has its undisputed place in the later stages of education, but is entirely out of place in the earlier years. We should not be taken to mean that Dr. Lewis has prepared a book that

may properly be administered to any class of young people of the age with which he has dealt. That would be denying the fundamental principle of our philosophy. But he undoubtedly has prepared the best sort of book for his own particular set of young people, and a book, furthermore, which points to other teachers the way in which they should get at the interests of their own students. Nor must it be imagined that his method runs to 'chatter,' or that it neglects the disciplinary aspect of instruction. He says at the outset that 'there is need of Spartan severity regarding chirography, orthography, punctuation, syntax, and logic. The task of securing correctness by Spartan methods, and, at the same time, of arousing an unconstrained love for noble literature, is the almost hopeless labor set for the English teacher. Gradgrind and enemy of Gradgrind he must be within the same hour. But there is no escaping the double duty, and no denying that the second part of it is the more important.' Note the emphasis of this latter clause, and note also the word 'unconstrained,' which must be the keynote of successful endeavor. It is because constraint is applied at

the wrong points that our schools make so miserable a failure of that part of their work which should exemplify the most shining success. And this misapplied constraint, be it observed, rarely comes from the initiative of the intelligent teacher; it rather originates in the councils of those set above him in authority, and is transmitted by him, unwillingly enough, to the hapless victims of the system with which both teachers and students are burdened.

A MEMORY FOREVER.

A CONTRIBUTOR to our English contemporary, 'The Academy,' has been sharpening his wits to a rather fine point in protesting against the introduction of school children, at too early an age, to the masterpieces of English poetry. His special text is found in Gray's 'Elegy,' and his childish recollections of that poem are decidedly diverting.

'I remember how I used to grind through it without one word of explanation when I was a little fellow of ten years of age [observe, ten!]: each line went by itself, and one consequence was that the thing in the piece that impressed me most was the reference to

"The dark, unfathomed caves of ocean bear."

I had had my neck nearly wrung off in those days for once saying that a noun "governed" something, and I was not the boy to risk further twisting by asking if it was the polar bear that was meant; but there was a magnificent remoteness in the dwelling of this creature that always pleased me, and it was not till later that I discovered what the verse really meant.'

Continuing, in similar strain, he asks:

'What boy ever believed in the "hoary-headed swain" or the "forefathers of the hamlet"? As for the youth

who gave to Misery all he had, a tear, and gained from Heaven, 't was all he wish'd, a friend, no schoolboy ever understood that transaction. And this poem, which boys cannot understand, and masters cannot hope to explain, is our accepted introduction to poetry.'

A like protest has been made, time and time again, against the rigid drill in Homer and Virgil which schoolmasters have deemed the necessary foundation of a sound classical education. These names become in recollection the symbols of a disagreeable experience, and whatever natural proclivities a youth may have for the enjoyment of poetry become stifled by such a premature attempt to force his taste. The result is that, from the time of his emancipation from this compulsory application of the classics, he shuns them ever afterwards, and, as one humorist has put it, acquires as the fruits of his training in Greek and Latin little more than the firm conviction that two such languages exist.

There is, no doubt, a certain force in protests of this sort, and injudicious methods in the education of young people have done much to justify the complaint; but there is another side to the question, a side which is, on the whole, the stronger of the two, and which there is a grow-

ing tendency among educators to ignore. The great variety of new educational devices which are nowadays urged upon the bewildered young teacher are too apt to have this in common, that they involve a relaxation of discipline for the student, and take from him the sense of responsibility for his own performance. If a problem seems too hard, there is always someone at hand to relieve him of the effort necessary to master it, and he is encouraged to seek such relief before he has half exhausted his own resources. Already many voices are raised among wisely conservative educators of long experience, warning the public of the consequences of this drift of our methods of instruction. By dint of this smoothing over of all difficulties we are not developing the intellectual stamina that was a product of the severer methods of the past; and however glibly we may talk about the encouragement of self-activity, we are really playing with it, instead of setting it in the forefront of our endeavors.

Recurring to the special subject of literature, there is a good deal to be said for the old-fashioned plan of anticipating the tastes that later years may be expected to develop. This does not neces-

sarily mean that the mental maw of a child of ten should be crammed with poems like the 'Elegy,' but it does mean, first, that nothing but very good literature should be given to school children, and, second, that it may safely be literature considerably in advance of their complete comprehension. The notion that it must all be explained and digested then and there is fatal to the growth of appreciation. Give a child something that appeals to him in part, and the sense of mystery which invests the rest of the work brings the best possible stimulus to his growth in the right direction. And then there is the faculty of memory to be considered. The disrepute into which cultivation of the memory has fallen is one of the most alarming features of recent theorizing, and no educational word is to-day more needed than a strong reassertion of the claims of this faculty upon the attention of the teacher. The right kind of student, struggling with the construction and the scansion of his Milton or his Virgil, and receiving only a dim sort of illumination upon his path, is all the while enriching his memory unawares with cadenced phrases that will reëcho in his consciousness through the years

to come, and give him spiritual sustenance in a future that would be harsh indeed without their softening ministry. We say the right kind of student—the other kind, whose occasional existence must be admitted, had better give up the pursuit of literary culture when it becomes certain that the portals of that paradise are not to be opened for him, and take to chemistry, or civil engineering, or political economy. But because there are in every generation some such men and women, subject to limitations that permanently exclude them from sharing in the highest hopes and aspirations of humanity, although capable of a life of honest activity upon some lower intellectual plane, let us take good heed not to add to their numbers through neglect of the agencies provided for our hand in the early years of training. It is better at the start to set the highest aim for all, abandoning it only in those cases whose development clearly proves it unattainable, than to set a lower aim merely because we may hope for its realization by a larger number of souls.

‘Not failure, but low aim, is crime.’

In the matter of education, no less than of the

subjective ideal, these words of Lowell are eternally true.

A thing of beauty is a joy forever, because, when it has once entered fully into the consciousness, it becomes a memory forever. We must not expect this penetrating process to be accomplished all at once. Of course, no child will half understand the beauty of a great poem or a fine example of imaginative prose. Let it but kindle his thought at a single point, and awaken his interest in partial degree only; the slow and semi-conscious development of his intellect may be trusted to carry on the work of assimilation to its completion. How many a writer has borne testimony to this fructifying influence of noble literature in the mind of childhood. The following passage from Mr. Ruskin's 'Fors' has been quoted more than once, but we must quote it again, because it tells the whole story :

'My mother forced me, by steady daily toil, to learn long chapters of the Bible by heart; as well as to read it every syllable through, aloud, hard names and all, from Genesis to the Apocalypse, about once a year; and to that discipline — patient, accurate, and resolute — I owe, not only a knowledge of the book, which I find occasionally serviceable, but much of my general power of taking pains, and the best part of my taste in literature.'

Our modern education is at fault if it does not find place for some such discipline as this during those precious early years — so soon at an end — when the fresh receptivity of the mind is not dulled, and the memory cheerfully responds to the stimulus of serious reading. Most men in middle life find that they preserve a more vivid recollection of their reading of twenty or thirty years ago than of the reading done by them at a very recent date.

There is perhaps no other of the great poets of the world quite equal to Virgil in the possession of the quality whereby the phrases imperfectly apprehended by childhood become an ever richer possession as time rolls by. For two thousand years the mintage of his thought has had this magical power to associate itself with the tenderest memories and the inmost sympathies of men. We all know Arnold's exquisite reference to the

‘Virgilian cry,

The sense of tears in mortal things.’

We all know, too, the series of instances so effectively marshalled by Mr. Frederic Myers in that essay on Virgil which is ‘classical’ in more senses than one. Less familiar, however, are the

two passages adduced in support of this claim by a correspondent of 'The Nation,' passages which reveal the minds of Robert Louis Stevenson and John Henry Newman, so dissimilar in most respects, for once working in complete harmony. This is what we find in 'The Ebb-Tide':

'The Virgil, which he could not exchange against a meal, had often consoled him in his hunger. He would study it, . . . seeking favorite passages, and finding new ones only less beautiful because they lacked the consecration and remembrance. Or he would pause on random country walks, sit on the pathside, gazing over the sea on the mountains of Eimeo, and dip into the "Æneid," seeking *sortes*. And if the oracle (as is the way of oracles) replied with no very certain or encouraging voice, visions of England, at least, would throng upon the exile's memory—the busy school-room, the green playing-fields, holidays at home, and the perennial roar of London, and the fireside, and the white head of his father. For it is the destiny of these grave, restrained, and classic writers, with whom we make enforced and often painful acquaintance at school, to pass into the blood and become native in the memory; so that a phrase of Virgil speaks not so much of Mantua or Augustus, but of English places and the student's own irrevocable youth.'

The other excerpt is from the 'Grammar of Assent,' and links with the name of Virgil the suggestion of Homer and Horace:

‘Passages which to a boy are but rhetorical common-places, neither better nor worse than a hundred others which any clever writer might supply, which he gets by heart and thinks very fine, and imitates, as he thinks, successfully in his own flowing versification, at length come home to him when long years have passed and he has had experience of life, and pierce him as if he had never before known them, with their sad earnestness and vivid exactness. Then he comes to understand how it is that lines, the birth of some chance morning or evening at an Ionian festival, or among the Sabine hills, have lasted generation after generation for thousands of years, with a power over the mind, and a charm, which the current literature of his own day, with all its obvious advantages, is utterly unable to rival. Perhaps this is the reason of the mediæval opinion about Virgil, as if a prophet or magician; his single words and phrases, his pathetic half-lines, giving utterance, as the voice of Nature herself, to that pain and weariness, yet hope of better things, which is the experience of her children in every time.’

The seeming drudgery of the old-fashioned type of education was well worth the while if it resulted in such memory-deposits as these, and it becomes little less than a crime to waste the opportunity, which early youth alone offers, of fertilizing the mind with the pollen that may, if all goes well, yield such a harvest in the later years.

SCIENCE IN SECONDARY
SCHOOLS.

PROFESSOR N. S. SHALER, in a recent contribution to 'Science,' tells the following story :

'The professor of mineralogy in Harvard University one day observed two young women examining his mineral cabinet, one of whom was evidently searching for some particular species. Offering his help, he found that the object of her quest was feldspar. When shown the mineral she seemed very much interested in the specimens, expressing herself as gratified at having the chance to see and touch them. The professor asked her why she so desired to see the particular mineral. The answer was that for some years she had been obliged to teach in a neighboring high school, among other things, mineralogy and geology, and that the word feldspar occurred so often in the text-book that her curiosity had become aroused as to its appearance.'

Upon reading such a story, the first impulse of anyone having to do with educational work is to make it the text for a disquisition upon the incapacity that our schools so often serve to shelter. Undoubtedly, the gravest defect in our system of public education is that it gives employ-

ment to, or rather that it is forced to put up with, teachers who have no scientific knowledge of the subjects in which they give what is called instruction. But this theme is so well-worn that we should despair of finding anything new to say about it. There is, however, an aspect of the matter that is comparatively neglected, and upon which it may be well to offer a few reflections.

Professor Shaler has a well-earned reputation as a specialist in geology, but he proves to be unlike most specialists in one very important respect. Instead of urging, as many men would have done under the circumstances, a better school equipment in geology, and the employment of carefully-trained teachers, he questions the advisability of including his subject at all in the work of the secondary school. He says :

‘For my own part, while it seems to me that some general notions concerning the history of the earth may very well be given to children, and this as information, it is futile to essay any study in this science which is intended to make avail of its larger educative influences with immature youths. The educative value of geology depends upon an ability to deal with the large conceptions of space, time, and the series of developments of energy which can only be compassed by mature minds. Immature youths, even if they intend to win the utmost profit

from geology, would be better occupied in studying the elementary tangible facts of those sciences such as chemistry, physics, or biology, sciences which in their synthesis constitute geology, rather than in a vain endeavor to deal in an immediate way with a learning which in a good measure to be profitable has to be approached with a well developed mind. The very fact that any considerable geological problem is likely to involve in its discussion some knowledge of physics, chemistry, zoölogy, and botany is sufficient reason for postponing the study until the pupil is nearly adult.'

One of the most satisfactory features of the discussion of which secondary education has recently been made the subject is the tendency to concentrate the work in natural science upon a few subjects, in order to do fuller justice to whatever work of that class is attempted. There is a growing recognition of the simple fact that science is a discipline and not a mere matter of information, and those who best appreciate the value of science in secondary education are coming to realize that better results may be gained by the serious study of two or three subjects than by the superficial survey of half a dozen. As long as science-teaching was an affair of the textbook and the *memoriter* exercise, it did not much matter whether the subjects taught were few or

many; in either case, they contributed next to nothing to the student's intellectual growth. But we have got distinctly beyond that primitive stage in our methods, and have learned to recognize the all-important character of the laboratory and the note-book.

This being the case, we are brought face to face with the fact that few schools are large enough or sufficiently well-supported to afford the luxury of half a dozen laboratory outfits, and that the old-fashioned high-school curriculum, with its 'fourteen weeks' in this science and its half-year in that, has become hopelessly antiquated. The reason why the young woman in Professor Shaler's story had never seen a piece of feldspar was probably that she had been set to teach, besides geology, a medley of such subjects as physics, chemistry, botany, zoölogy, astronomy, and human physiology. Under the circumstances it would have been unreasonable to expect her to know feldspar by sight; or, for that matter, to dissect a cat, or perform an operation in quantitative analysis. Professor Tarr, in 'The Educational Review,' gives us a delightful bit of personal experience with the system that produces

science teachers who have never seen feldspar to know it. He says : ' A short time ago, I found a teacher in a normal school in the State of New York, who, with the aid of an assistant, was obliged to try to train teachers to impart instruction in physiology, anatomy, zoölogy, botany, geology, physical geography, geography proper, astronomy, physics, and chemistry. Now temperance physiology is added.' The sooner the absurdity of such an attempt is realized, and the sooner our high schools throw overboard two-thirds of this ill-assorted cargo, the more likely science will be to justify the claims that have so long been made on its behalf, and that have thus far remained at ludicrous variance with its results, as far, at least, as three-fourths of our high schools and colleges are concerned.

Professor Tarr's suggestion for the reorganization of science work in the secondary school is worthy of consideration, although we think that it makes too great a concession to an unworthy popular ideal. He urges, in brief, that each secondary school should make a specialty of one scientific subject, teaching it in the most approved modern way, with the help of collec-

tions, apparatus, and laboratories. The other subjects, in response to 'the demand of the people for information in the various branches of national science,' should be distinctly classed (for that school) as 'minor sciences,' and pursued in the old superficial way. Meanwhile, the colleges should come to the aid of the schools by permitting a greater freedom of choice in their entrance requirements, so that preparatory work done in one subject should be as available for admission as work done in any other, provided that it meet a somewhat rigid set of conditions as to methods and time employed.

While some such plan as this may be found necessary, as marking the transitional stage of secondary work in which we are likely to remain for some years yet, it can hardly be urged as a finality. Our ultimate aim must be, in all the grades of school and college work, to secure the best, even at the cost of a somewhat ruthless treatment of the indefensible popular notion. We must resolutely seek to subordinate the ideal of information to the ideal of discipline, and be willing to relegate to personal tastes and later opportunities the acquisition of knowl-

edge upon many subjects of the highest scientific importance. What is all-important to the student is a comprehension of the *method* of science; he may safely be left, if this is once given him, to possess himself of as much of the *matter* as his inclinations and interests may demand. A narrow but thorough discipline is vastly better than a wide and discursive range of information. This may be got without the stimulus of a strictly-ordered programme; that will hardly be acquired except under guidance at school or college. Perhaps the best evidence of the value of such a training as is here advocated may be found in the higher education of the traditional English system. That system has often been charged with ignoring many important intellectual interests, and there is no doubt that it has done so. But its vindication may be found in the type of trained intellect that it has projected into the arena of public life, and amply satisfies the judicious observer.

THE WORLD'S MEMORY.

‘THE world’s memory must be kept alive, or we shall never see an end of its old mistakes. We are in danger to lose our identity and become infantile in every generation. That is the real menace under which we cower everywhere in this age of change.’ These words, pregnant with vital meaning, and deep in their import to our civilization, were spoken one day at Princeton by Professor Woodrow Wilson, officiating as orator of the Sesquicentennial Celebration. Nor were they an incidental feature of the eloquent and masterly oration in which they occurred; they were rather of its very texture, and embodied the quintessence of its thought. Political philosophers who have espoused the cause of modern democracy, and who have, with alternating hopes and fears, watched its triumphant onward march, — who have thrilled with its beginnings among sturdy Helvetians and determined Netherlanders, who have studied it as a peaceful development in

England and as a volcanic outburst in France, who have seen it wrest constitution after constitution from European monarchs, and who have witnessed its subjugation of the great New World, — have always been insistent upon its dangers, and particularly upon the danger of its tendency, everywhere manifest, to disregard the teachings of history, and to reject the experience of the past — merely because it is the past — as a guide to the future. It was, then, peculiarly fitting that a note of warning upon this subject should have been made the keynote of Professor Wilson's address, prepared, as that address was, to commemorate the sesquicentennial anniversary of a famous institution of learning, and to emphasize the function to be performed for our civilization by all such institutions, if they are to prove themselves worthy of their trust.

No society can safely break with the past save by a gradual process that is content to sift the teachings of experience, and reject only what has proved itself prejudicial to human progress. Those who do not sympathize with the past, and would have us once for all freed from its trammels, are precisely those who do not understand

the past, and are persuaded that the essentials of social organization, like its trappings, are matters of fashion, varying from age to age. But the student of history who has seen beneath externals, and who has caught anything of the spirit of the human epic, knows that it is foolish to judge institutions and beliefs and social ideals by absolute standards, knows that all these things are products of an evolutionary process whereby every people in every century has been fitted with what it has most needed in its own particular stage of culture. That for our own uses we reject such devices as monarchy and Mohammedanism and the mediæval guilds, does not justify us in assuming that they have worked harm in their own time and place. Rather do we see in the fact of their existence and long-continued potency their ample justification. And if we find our own national inheritance to include certain elements that to the clear-sighted among us seem irrational, impeding the steps of progress, we should take long and prayerful counsel before seeking to sweep them away, restraining our impatience by the reflection that whatever is deeply rooted in the experience of

past generations must have subserved some useful purpose, and that the possibilities of its usefulness may not yet be exhausted.

The universities clearly have no task more important than that of drawing our attention to the past, and of encouraging us in a sympathetic understanding and comprehension of the past. Professor Wilson stated one of the deepest of truths when he spoke in the following language :

‘Unschooling men have only their habits to remind them of the past, only their desires and their instinctive judgments of what is to guide them into the future; the college should serve the state as its organ of recollection, its seat of vital memory. It should give the country men who know the probabilities of failure and success, who can separate the tendencies which are permanent from the tendencies which are of the moment merely, who can distinguish promises from threats, knowing the life men have lived, the hopes they have tested, and the principles they have proved.’

In the same spirit of wise patriotism, the President of the United States, on the following day, added the testimony of the statesman to that of the scholar.

‘In a nation like ours, charged with the care of numerous and widely varied interests, a spirit of conserva-

tism and toleration is absolutely essential. A collegiate training, the study of principles unvexed by distracting and misleading influences, and a correct apprehension of the theories upon which our republic is established, ought to constitute the college graduate a constant monitor, warning against popular rashness and excess.'

How greatly we need as a nation to take to heart such doctrine as this, is only too clearly proved by the political record of the past quarter-century. 'Popular rashness and excess' have been visible everywhere in the counsels of our leaders and the acts of our public officers. In our legislation upon some of the most important subjects of public concern we have run the whole gamut of folly, delusion, and fatuous ignorance of the operations of natural law. We have set at defiance the best-established principles of political and economic thought, and have learned our lesson so ill that no sooner have we recovered in part from one disaster than we have rushed blindly upon another. Instead of keeping alive the world's memory, we do not succeed in keeping alive our memory as individuals. The shallowness and ignorance, if not the criminal culpability, of some political leader may be to-day so exposed as to put him

clearly to shame in the eyes of the world; yet five years later we may find him again a man of position and influence, trusted by those whom he has betrayed, his support sought after by thousands who have either forgotten his past, or are guileless enough to believe that the leopard can change his spots. If we are to look anywhere for the healing of our diseased memory, whether individual or national, it must surely be to those institutions in which the truth, undimmed by prejudice or passion,—the truth of yesterday as well as of to-day,—is sought after by earnest students, under the guidance of men who have devoted their lives to seeking out the causes of things.

Such a home for seekers after truth, such an altar for keeping ‘the world’s memory’ aglow, is pictured in the closing passage of Professor Wilson’s oration, a passage so noble and so beautiful that it must not suffer the violence of dismemberment.

‘I have had sight of the perfect place of learning in my thought; a free place, and a various, where no man could be and not know with how great a destiny knowledge had come into the world — itself a little world; but

not perplexed, living with a singleness of aim not known without; the home of sagacious men, hard-headed, and with a will to know, debaters of the world's questions every day and used to the rough ways of democracy; and yet a place removed — calm Science seated there, recluse, ascetic, like a nun, not knowing that the world passes, not caring if the truth but come in answer to her prayer; and Literature, walking within her open doors, in quiet chambers with men of olden time, storied walls about her and calm voices infinitely sweet; here “magic casements opening on the foam of perilous seas in fairy lands forlorn,” to which you may withdraw and use your youth for pleasure; there windows open straight upon the street where many stand and talk intent upon the world of men and business. A place where ideals are kept in heart in an air they can breathe, but no fools' paradise. A place where to hear the truth about the past and hold debate upon the affairs of the present, with knowledge and without passion; like the world in having all men's life at heart, a place for men and all that concerns them; but unlike the world in its self-possession, its thorough way of talk, its care to know more than the moment brings to light; slow to take excitement, its air pure and wholesome with a breath of faith; every eye within it bright in the clear day and quick to look towards heaven for the confirmation of its hope.'

We may fitly supplement this passage, and at the same time bring these observations to a close, by an extract from Dr. Henry Van

Dyke's Princeton ode, an effort no less worthy of the occasion than was Professor Wilson's address:

‘God made the light, and all the light is good.
There is no war between the old and new;
The conflict lies between the false and true.
The stars, that high in heaven their courses run,
In glory differ, but their light is one.
The beacons, gleaming o’er the sea of life,
Are rivals but in radiance, not in strife.’

· SCHOLARSHIP AND CULTURE.

THE higher education of to-day, with all its endowments and auxiliaries, with all the resources of wealth and men at its command, is still open to one of the gravest of charges. Its fundamental aim seems to be the production of scholarly acquirement rather than of cultivated intelligence. Because scholarship is pedestrian in its methods, and requires only industrious application for its achievement, and because culture is to be attained only in more difficult ways, and under more genial guidance, our universities manifest a strong tendency to seek the path of least resistance in their educational effort, and to direct their activities toward securing results that make an imposing quantitative showing, but that leave much to be desired in the quality of the product. The old antithesis between scholarship and culture has never been more strongly marked than in the educational programmes of the present day, and the need

has never been more urgent of making a plea for the neglected interests of the latter. More and more do our universities tend to send out into the fields of thought young men who are narrow specialists; less and less do they tend to encourage the broad-minded development of the intellect that culture demands.

In the complexity and variety of modern education, there are whole tracts of thought that may be frankly abandoned to the claims of pure scholarship. The entire region of science, mathematical, physical, biological, and social, may be yielded without demur to the work of minute investigation, orderly classification, and logical construction. Culture is to be had from these subjects, but knowledge, and the applications of knowledge, constitute the immediate, and to a considerable extent the sole, aim with which they are pursued. But humanity is a finer thing than knowledge, and the subjects whose consideration makes for humanity must suffer degradation if we permit ourselves to lose sight of their essential excellence. These subjects are those of the literary and artistic groups, and, largely, also those of the historical group,

although in this latter domain mere scholarship has some claims that are legitimate. What the advocates of culture and of humane education are bound to resist most strenuously, and if need be to the death, is the intrusion of scientific methods in the narrow sense, and the futile industry of the philological or historical specialist, into the pursuit of literary studies.

This subject is not a new one. It has for many years engaged the pens and the persuasive powers of able men having the interests of the humanities at heart. But the tendency against which our protest is declared remains persistent, and as long as it controls the teaching of the literary classics, whether ancient or modern, in any large number of our universities, it must be combated without ceasing, even with much repetition and the laboring of the simplest points. Mr. Churton Collins has said many a strong and vital word upon this theme in connection with the study of modern literature, and we do not hesitate to reproduce some of his observations, even at the risk of presenting ideas that will seem hackneyed to those who of late years have been following this conflict of educational ideals.

‘To say that the anarchy which has resulted from confusing the distinction between the study and interpretation of Literature as the expression of art and genius, and its study and interpretation as a mere monument of language, has had a more disastrous effect on education generally, would be to state very imperfectly the truth of the case. It has led to inadequate and even false conceptions of what constitutes Literature. It has led to all that is of essential importance in literary study being ignored, and all that is of secondary or accidental interest being preposterously magnified; to the substitution of grammatical and verbal commentary for the relation of a literary masterpiece to history, to philosophy, to æsthetics, to the mechanical inculcation of all that can be imparted, as it has been acquired, by cramming, for the intelligent application of principles to expression. It has led to the severance of our Literature from all that constitutes its vitality and virtue as an active power, and from all that renders its development and peculiarities intelligible as a subject of historical study. In a word, it has led to a total misconception of the ends at which literary instruction should aim, as well as of its most appropriate instruments and methods.’

This indictment, severe as it is, does not exaggerate the alarming conditions of literary study in the majority of our universities, and indicates clearly the need of a far-reaching reform.

In the study of the ancient classics, even more than in the study of modern literature, the same unfortunate conditions obtain, and the

young student's passport to success and professional advancement is too often found, not in his power to interpret the ideas upon which literature is based, and which make it significant, but rather upon the ingenuity with which its mechanical aspects are paraded, or the meticulous work of linguistic and syntactical analysis. This, too, is an old story, but the importance of classical studies in the development of culture is so great that their friends cannot remain silent while their very existence is jeopardized. Classical studies are already too much discredited by the men of their own household, and the most dangerous foe of these studies is the man who, while posing as their champion, does his best to destroy their vitality by ignoring their lasting claims to our consideration.

The immediate suggestion for the above observations was provided us by a paper on 'Classical Teaching in Italy,' written for 'La Rassegna Internazionale' by Signor Enrico Corradini. Of all countries in the world, Italy should be bound to preserve the methods of the humanities in its teaching of the classics—Italy, the birthplace of Latin literature, and one of the

ancient seats of Greek civilization. But even Italy has failed in its obligations, and allowed its classical teaching to degenerate into textual and philological investigations, into minute studies of historical and archæological questions. Signor Corradini's personal recollections are so much to the point that we have thought it best to translate his own words into English.

'To begin with a recollection of my own, when at the age of eighteen I entered the university for my first course in letters, my first compliment from one of the professors was this: "Don't you know German? You must learn German if you wish to profit by your studies." I was a youth of moderate intelligence, moderately desirous of learning; I wished to become a fairly good teacher or a fairly good writer; I had entered the university knowing Italian and Latin pretty well, and Greek after a fashion; but I could have expected anything rather than that an Italian youth, desirous of perfecting himself in the literature of his country and in the ancient literatures of which it is the outgrowth, should be advised to begin by learning German. I suddenly perceived that I and the worthy professor who gave me that advice must be two persons by nature irreconcilable, and this irreconcilability was soon manifested between me and the other professors, between the little Greek and Latin and Italian taught me in the good old fashion in the college of priests and the much Greek and Latin and Italian which they wished to teach me, scientifically and by modern methods, in the university. Thus my four or five years of

the university were for me, and, God helping me, will remain, the most Beotian of my whole life. What had happened? I had found the historical method, naturally the German, in full flower at the university; that is to say, a manner of teaching on the part of the professors and a manner of learning on the part of my fellow-students in no wise corresponding to my intellectual and moral inclinations, whether I wished to become a fair teacher or a fair man of letters, not corresponding to the nature of those same classical studies, or their genial tradition among us since the days of the Renaissance, not corresponding to the purpose of preparing youths for teaching, to the vital character of our people, to the ambition of any intellect or any talent, however modest. I found, in short, in place of geniality and moral consciousness, patient, frivolous, and futile research; in place of any attempt of the spirit of man, brought into contact with the most beautiful literature in the world, to impart its fire and force to hundreds of youths, I found certain cold and dull ultramontane senilities forcing youths to Benedictine tasks of minute philology and minute history, that they might acquire a perfectly useless *éducation de luxe*, whatever serious work they might otherwise have wished to do. In place of what we are accustomed to call *belles-lettres*, I found a scientific criticism, so-called by the ridiculous vanity of those who practise it. Homer and Demosthenes, Virgil and Cæsar, Dante and Petrarch, as if not sufficiently outraged by the fate that for centuries turned them over to priests and monks, had suffered final disaster by falling into the hands of the new Byzantines from Austria and Prussia.'

The language is strong, but who shall say that

the strictures are unjust? Those who make themselves the partisans of this sort of classical teaching are apt to say that they are opposing positive knowledge to the nebulous theories of the rhetoricians and æstheticians. But these may also claim a positive character for their teachings, and they may add, furthermore, in the words of our present advocate, that when classical instruction in Italy was in the hands of the rhetorical æstheticians, ‘the classical authors were read because they are great poets, because they are great artists, because they are great philosophers, because they tell us great things, because they are the mirror of noble life and the witness of fair humanity.’ And again, ‘if Greek and Latin are studied throughout the world, it is because the people who spoke those languages were in large measure the fathers of our modern civilization, and civilization is humanity, not Byzantine erudition; if Greek and Latin are studied throughout the world, it is because in them is expressed the maximum potency of life, fair and strong, speculative and active, with which men and races have ever been animated, and this too is humanity, not erudition.’ We

should like to reproduce this vigorous and eloquent argument at greater length, did space permit; as it is, we are glad to have had the opportunity of calling thus much of attention to it, and of affirming our belief that it represents an ideal of teaching that now more than ever is needed in the work of higher education, both in Europe and in our own country.

TWO CENTENNIALS.

IN the Autumn of 1901, a famous New England institution of learning celebrated, with ceremonies at once brilliant and dignified, the second centennial of its birth. The occasion was in every way impressive; the sense of its participants for the spectacular and the artistic was gratified by the pomp and circumstance of academic processions and convocations; the intelligence of those who shared in the event, whether as eye-witnesses or as observers from a distance, was gratified by the exhibition of high intellectual ideals and by the lesson of historical continuity of aim and achievement which the celebration evoked. Two hundred years of an ever-widening influence for good upon the community, of an ever-deepening devotion to the truth that makes men free, constitute a heritage in which the men of Yale may take a just pride, and afford an earnest of the fact, half-forgotten at times by the most thoughtful of us in the

stress of our modern materialism, that the life of the spirit still has its share in our national development, and still urges its insistent claim upon the better part of our nature.

A few weeks later, a famous newspaper rounded out the first century of its existence, and, with pardonable pride, seized upon the occasion for a review of its past. The incidents of this celebration were a special historical issue of the newspaper, a complimentary banquet tendered to its present proprietors and editors, and the publication of a remarkable collection of congratulatory letters and testimonials. There were no processions, no costumes, no academic functions,—in the nature of the case there could be none of these things, — but there was a widespread feeling, which received manifold and often unexpected expression, that the newspaper in question had been one of the most active and beneficent agencies in the history of our civilization during the entire hundred years of its publication. Those who are now directing the course of the ‘Evening Post’ of New York have cause for self-congratulation in the record made for them by their predecessors, in the

progress or triumph of the good causes for which their journal has unswervingly contended, and in the steadfastness with which its original aims have been pursued. No one to-day, with the century's history of that newspaper for a guide, could frame a more exactly truthful statement of its work than is provided by the programme printed in its very first issue: 'The design of this paper is to diffuse among the people correct information on all interesting subjects; to inculcate just principles in religion, morals, and politics; and to cultivate a taste for sound literature.'

It is not our present purpose to speak in detail of the history or the achievements of either the college or the newspaper, but the close coincidence of their centennial celebrations has set us to thinking about their comparative influence, and started the question as to which of the two has proved the more potent agency for good. The question is obviously one that cannot be decided definitely, yet some analysis of the equation presented may prove interesting, and an examination of its several terms will afford some basis for an intelligent opinion.

Stated in its simplest form, the comparison

takes the following shape : the college influences a few hundred men, but its influence is exerted during the formative period of life, is steadily exerted for a number years, and usually dwarfs all other influences during that period. The newspaper, on the other hand, appeals to many thousands of men, but its appeal is intermittent, and always subject to the competition of other influences. It is, moreover, an appeal made to men whose intellectual outlook is fairly well fixed, and whose opinions are not easily to be moulded. The college has the additional advantage of exerting social, artistic, emotional, and other extra-intellectual influences upon the men whom it brings together ; while the newspaper, not bringing men together at all, is deprived of every hold of this sort upon them. On the other hand, the life of the collegian is a semi-cloistered existence, offering limited opportunities for making actual use of the guidance so amply offered ; whereas the man for whom the newspaper is produced is in the thick of the world's conflict, confronted every day by practical problems of conduct, and to him the newspaper — that is, the sort of newspaper which provides the text

for these reflections — comes just at the time of need, and brings its trained intelligence or its broad social philosophy to bear upon the question at issue. This is its special opportunity, and here, in proportion as the reader believes in its honesty and its sincerity, does it directly influence him to action.

We hesitate to strike a balance in a case like this, where none of the terms concerned can be reduced to quantitative shape, yet it seems reasonably clear that the right sort of newspaper—the one that always puts truth above party, intelligence above passion, and philosophy above prejudice — may be at least as worthy an agency of the higher civilization as the largest university. Specifically, we should hesitate to say that any one of our educational institutions had wrought more effectively for good during the past hundred years than the newspaper now under consideration. But it would be impossible to name another American newspaper of which this might be said for so long a period, or perhaps for any period. However, one example is enough for proof of our contention, and that example is afforded by the hundred years of honest and

independent journalism for which the paper of Hamilton, and Coleman, and Bryant, of Messrs. Schurz, White, and Godkin, stands to-day in the estimation of the educated public.

The striking thing about this example of successful journalism in the higher sense is that the success has been achieved under competitive conditions. The newspaper in question has been a paying enterprise without sacrificing anything of its honesty or independence. While other journals have achieved a commercial success by the sale of editorial opinions, or by allying themselves with special interests, and suppressing the truth wherever it was likely to imperil those interests, this journal has kept clear of all such entanglements and insincerities, and furnished an object-lesson of clean journalism unaffected in its course by the claims of the counting-room. The plea for venal and vulgar newspaper enterprise usually takes the form of saying that papers must be sold and advertisers placated; this newspaper has by its example retorted that the truth must be told and honest opinion expressed, no matter what the effect upon sales and advertisements. And it is a great thing to have proved,

even by a single courageous example, that under such conditions the financial returns may safely be left to take care of themselves.

This may be taken as an argument against our old hobby of the endowed newspaper, but we propose to convert it into an argument in favor of such an undertaking. For with all that has been legitimately achieved for dignity and independence in the case now under consideration, we believe that much more might be achieved were a newspaper freed from the necessity of making itself pay. In the first place, it might appeal to a far wider range of interests, and enlist the coöperation of a far greater number of authoritative writers. If it were frankly to assume the position assumed by every college of high standing and offer its beneficiaries a service that did not pretend to be measured by what was paid for it, there would be an immeasurable enlargement of its possibilities for good. This is the result that might be reached by a liberal endowment, and this alone would place a newspaper upon the footing of a university. Even the best of newspapers is forced to depend upon the advertiser for its main support, and the col-

umns which are filled with advertisements must stand in startling contrast to the columns that are filled with news and expert opinion. In the very nature of the case, and under the best possible conditions, the advertising columns of a newspaper are largely given up to special pleading and misrepresentation. The commercial newspaper, however good its intentions, must make this compromise with conscience, trusting to the intelligence of its readers to make due discrimination between the printed page that is bought and the printed page that is unpurchasable. The great advantage of a newspaper that should be strictly an educational enterprise, properly supported by endowment, would be that it need not depend upon the advertiser for any part of its support.

Our attention has been directed to this aspect of the case by an incident in the late history of the very journal of which we have been speaking in such terms of deserved praise. During the political campaign of its centennial year in the city of its publication, that journal was enlisted heart and soul upon the side of civic righteousness. Yet in the very thick of the contest its

columns gave daily display, in the form of paid advertisements, to the specious special pleadings of the partisans of corruption and civic disgrace. There was no disguise about the proceeding; the advertisements were marked as such, and, according to the accepted ethical code of the journalist's profession, the thing was perfectly legitimate. Yet a higher code than this is readily conceivable, and such a code would be made possible by the endowment of journalism. Since we are determined to view the ideal newspaper as belonging in the same category with the university, the absurdity of the existing practice appears clearly enough when we point out that its educational analogue would be offered by a university that should open certain of its classrooms to the advocates of dishonest money and faith-healing and astrology, thus flouting the very image of truth, in whose name alone a university has the right to exist. The fact that the institution derived support from this barter of its shelter and its sanction would not condone such an offense against educational morality, nor, rightly considered, is the corresponding offense on the part of a newspaper to be condoned.

CONCERNING DEGREES.

A MEASURE providing for the regulation of academic degrees in the State of Illinois was introduced into the Legislature not long ago, and, although defeated, was interesting as the first serious attempt to do away with what has long been a great evil and a scandal to the good name of the State. For several years past, Chicago has harbored certain institutions, existing chiefly on paper, incorporated under the lax educational statutes of the commonwealth, and engaged in the nefarious business of furnishing academic or professional degrees to all applicants offering the stipulated consideration in cold cash. These rascally traffickers in titles to distinction have published their alluring offers far and wide, and have found gullible victims in considerable numbers, mostly in other States and other lands. A number of Englishmen, for example, have become bachelors or doctors of these bogus institutions, and the swindle has attracted enough attention

to be made a subject of inquiry in the English Parliament. For a long time the abuse has been a crying one, and those who are seeking to end it should not be discouraged into inactivity by the failure of their first effort.

In general terms, it was proposed that the granting of degrees in Illinois should be restricted to institutions of approved educational standing, and to this end a State Commission was to be established, with power to pass upon the claims and pretensions of institutions that wish to bestow degrees upon their students. So far, the proposed measure corresponded to the sort of regulation that already obtains in other States, and that has been enforced with such conspicuous success in the State of New York. Further, it was proposed that, in the case of colleges to be incorporated in the future, a minimum endowment of one hundred thousand dollars should be an imperative condition of the degree-conferring power. There was also the wise proviso that degrees might not be granted by any institutions carried on for private gain. The measure was supported by all the agencies in the State that stand for serious education, as distinguished from sham education,

but the narrow and selfish interests — to say nothing of the dishonest interests — arrayed against it began the familiar work of distortion and misrepresentation as soon as the measure was made public, and eventually succeeded in preventing its enactment. But the struggle is by no means ended, for the good name and the dignity of the State demand that the title-factories should be suppressed, demand that every degree henceforth granted under the authority of Illinois should stand for good work done, or, in the case of the honorary degree, for an achievement judged to be worthy by some reputable institution of learning.

For the weak-minded persons who are willing to purchase the fraudulent degrees so obligingly offered we must confess that we have little sympathy. It is a pitiful form of vanity to which the allurements of the diploma-shops appeal, and we are not particularly concerned to protect that sort of ambition from the consequences of its own foolishness. But the public has a right to be protected from charlatans of all descriptions, and the granting of a degree is an act that touches public interests so nearly that the process should

be hedged about with all reasonable restrictions. Indeed, the provisions of the defeated bill seemed to us to err, if anything, upon the side of leniency, and we viewed with no little suspicion the stipulation of one hundred thousand dollars as the minimum endowment of degree-conferring institutions hereafter to be incorporated. The New York requirement of five times this endowment would seem to be the wiser provision of the two, for surely the latter sum is none too large for the needs of any new college that would be a desirable addition to those we already have in this State. It is to be noted that the bill was not made retroactive in this matter of endowment, so that no injustice to existing institutions could have resulted from its enactment.

The desire to parade a degree of some kind is, no doubt, one more illustration of the instinct that has created orders of nobility in the older civilizations, that has given Frenchmen the mania for decorations, and made Germans such sticklers for the use of whatever official titles they may bear. The American character is popularly supposed to rise above these vanities, but this is only a superstition. The desire of

the individual to be in some way distinguished from his fellows is so inherent in the human nature which all peoples have in common, that, if denied vent in one direction, it will find it in another — that, if not allowed the gewgaws of knighthood and rank, it will find a substitute in the mock distinctions that come from membership in societies which shall here be nameless, but of which no reader will have to look far for as many examples as he needs. Of course, the ambition to possess an academic degree is a shade worthier than the ambition to be a Grand Commander of something or other, or to sport the proud badge of the Scions of Colonial Tax-Gatherers. The former ambition betrays, at least, some trace of the feeling that intellectual distinctions have more intrinsic worth than any others; yet even in this case how often is it true that the external mark of the distinction is the thing sought after, rather than the powers for which it should rightfully stand.

The full force of this observation requires for its realization that we take into account not only the poor souls who stand ready to purchase degrees outright at the current market rates, but

also those who bid for them indirectly, who make gifts to colleges, for example, anticipating in return the honorary doctorate. We look with righteous scorn upon the English ministry that is willing to traffic in titles of nobility, — making peers out of brewers and stockbrokers whose political contributions have been sufficiently liberal, — and how much more contemptible is the action of the American college that is willing to degrade in similar fashion the titles of intellectual aristocracy which it ought to guard as a sacred trust. There is a good deal that might be said also about the motives of those who earn their degrees in legitimate ways. Many students seem to think that getting a degree is the be-all and the end-all of college life. ‘Will it count for a degree?’ is the question they ask when some new kind of work is recommended to them. Every teacher knows this spirit, and knows how deadly an enemy it is of all culture for the sake of culture. If the spectacle of young men and young women actuated mainly by this motive is a disheartening one, a spectacle even more disheartening is offered by those students of advanced age who so often are found in the classes of our

larger universities, and who are so obviously out of place there. We make no reference to men and women seeking to round out, in later life, the defective education of their youth. Their pathetic case calls for nothing but sympathy and respect. We do, however, refer to those who, having got far beyond the period of their lives when training of the university type was what they most needed, submit themselves to that training for the sake of its prizes. It is not the best sort of discipline for them; it is intellectually wasteful rather than economical; nothing but the incentive of the doctorate impels them to undergo it; the act is, in short, an unworthy concession to an artificial standard of culture.

It is this tendency to make a fetich of the degree — as if there were no other possible criterion of a man's attainments — that is responsible, on the one hand, for the disreputable business of diploma-selling, and, on the other, for the spectacle of graybeards engaged in the performance of tasks fitted only for youth. If a fictitious value were not attached to degrees in the pedagogical estimation, we should have neither the one nor the other of these evils to deplore. The

common university attitude toward degrees is not unsuggestive of the attitude of the church toward the consecration of priests: it is tacitly assumed that the scholarship has no validity which is not thus certified at the hands of men who have themselves gone through the academic routine and received the consecrating cowl. Yet the cowl no more makes the scholar than it does the monk. Again, those who are banded together by the common possession of degrees, especially if they are engaged in the professional work of education, are too apt to assume an attitude similar to that assumed by trades unions toward the outsider. They seem to say that, whatever distinction a man may have achieved in irregular and unorthodox ways, he cannot really be a superior person, because he has dared to court fame while forsaking the beaten path. The tendencies which we have thus noted do not often go to the extremes of arrogance or fatuousness, but they go farther than they should be allowed to, and they sometimes work grave injustice. The president of one of our leading universities spoke, a few years ago, of the Roman emperor who wished that all his enemies had a single neck that he

might cut it off at one stroke, and then said that, for his part, he wished that all degrees had a single neck, that a single blow might put an end to them. While we should hardly express our own opinion in so hot a fashion as this, we can neither help feeling a certain sympathy with the utterance, nor help sharing in the indignation by which it was inspired.

THE FUTURE OF ENGLISH SPELLING.

AGITATION for a reform of English spelling has been going on for a long while, both in England and the United States, but the reformers have received slight encouragement from the public. The empirical reconstruction urged by Webster has given place to the more scientific conceptions of modern philology; but all the reformers, men of science and empiricists alike, have made no serious breach in the defences of conservatism. Every form of argument, from plea to denunciation, has been enlisted in the attack, but the citadel has remained impregnable. Even Webster's 'Dictionary' has grown conservative in its old age, and bears but few traces of the fiery radicalism of its youth. The little systems of the phonetists have had their day, each in its turn arousing the public to momentary mirth or wonder, and then giving place to another no less grotesque and impossible. The legislature of the

nation and the school authorities of the locality have been petitioned and memorialized and appealed to in the most frantically misspelled terms, and have remained obdurate. The publisher here and the editor there, who, impatient of delay, have allowed zeal to outrun judgment, and have sought to force a reformed spelling upon the reluctant public, have had only their labor for their pains, and made for themselves the old discovery that man is not a logical animal. Judging by the almost total failure of the English spelling-reformer to accomplish his purpose, we may with peculiar fitness apply to him the words of the poet :

‘ He weaves, and is clothed with derision;
Sows, and he shall not reap.’

The net result of all his efforts in the United States is summed up in the few Websterian forms that have found a lodgment in usage (many of these abhorrent to a delicate sense), in the adoption of a few other simplified forms by scattered publishers, and in the tentative admission to some of our later dictionaries of an appendix of amended spellings.

In the face of this persistent opposition to a

change which has been advocated by so many able scholars and supported by so many plausible arguments, it is worth while to inquire into the causes of what spelling-reformers have too hastily assumed to be mere obstinacy or unreasoning prejudice. The time is past for them to say with Professor Lounsbury that 'there is certainly nothing more contemptible than our present spelling, unless it be the reasons usually given for clinging to it,' or with Professor Whitney that 'it need not be said that the objections brought on etymological and literary and other grounds against the correction of English spelling are the unthinking expressions of ignorance and prejudice.' If these statements were true, the reformers would have something substantial to show for their long-continued efforts, and the fact is notorious that they have almost nothing to show for them. When we come to think of it, the wholesale ascription of 'ignorance and prejudice' to the many men who have opposed the spelling-mongers is a weapon more likely than not to recoil upon those who use it as an argument ; while 'contemptible' is about as ill-fitting an epithet as could be found, whether to

describe the conservative position itself, or the spelling which is the primary object of attack. Our English spelling may be irrational, and inconsistent, and difficult of mastery, but it is just as much a natural product as is a tree or a wild animal. One may prefer the order and symmetry of a French garden to a free woodland growth; but he who has a nice feeling for the meaning of words does not call the forest oak contemptible because it is gnarled.

An article in 'The Forum,' by Mr. Benjamin E. Smith, the editor of 'The Century Dictionary,' quotes with seeming approval the above dicta of Professors Lounsbury and Whitney, but proceeds to discuss the subject in a very different spirit. Mr. Smith is a pronounced advocate of spelling-reform, but he reckons with the arguments of his opponents instead of brushing them aside as unworthy of serious consideration. The conservative could ask for no better statement than the following of the reason that chiefly influences him in opposing any radical change. This reason is 'the closely-knit association, in all minds, between the form of the printed word, or of the printed page, and the spiritual atmos-

phere which breathes through our language and literature. There is a deep-rooted feeling that the existing printed form is not only *a* symbol but the *most fitting* symbol of our mother tongue, and that a radical change in this symbol must inevitably impair *for us* the beauty and spiritual effectiveness of that which it symbolizes. Could the literary spirit even of a Shakespeare, we feel, retain for us undiminished its delicacy and power if clothed in the spelling of the "Fonetic Nuz"? The feeling thus expressed is akin to that which makes us enjoy literature far more in the pages of a comely and carefully-studied volume than we could enjoy the same work in some cheap and tasteless reprint. It is the same sort of feeling that heightens for all readers of taste the power of literature when it appeals to them from the pages of a Conquet edition, or a publication of the Grolier Club, or an issue of the Kelmscott Press. It is useless to call such feelings irrational, or to make light of them as arguments against a change; they exist, and they exert a controlling influence upon the decisions of the majority of intelligent readers. Those who cannot share them, and allow them their full weight in

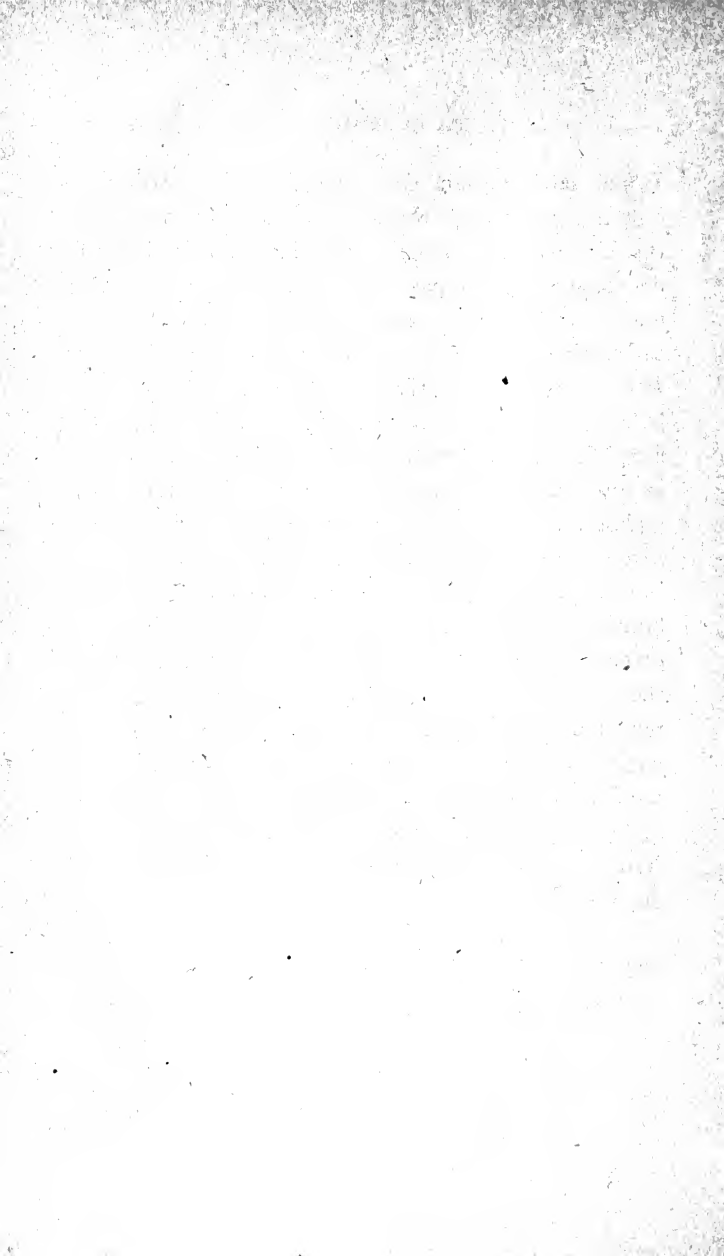
the discussion, are as incompetent to pronounce judgment upon the question of spelling-reform as are the color-blind to pronounce upon Venetian painting, or those without an ear for music to pass upon the achievements of Bach and Beethoven.

This of course is only one of the reasons for which a wholesale change in our spelling is opposed by so many earnest thinkers. There are other weighty considerations, such as the danger of making the great mass of printed literature in the least degree difficult of access for the average reader; and the danger of obscuring etymologies, of which too much has doubtless been made, but which remains a real danger in spite of the many efforts to minimize it. We must also remember that the arguments made in behalf of reform are often greatly overstated. We are given the wildest estimates of the amount of money that might be saved in our printing bills, of the number of years that might be saved in the work of primary education, of the obstacles that might be removed from the path of foreign students of our language. All of these arguments have weight, but they do not have anything like the weight given them by phonetic extremists. Mr. Smith,

who is not an extremist, discusses the whole question with the utmost fairness, admits that spelling-reform 'has made almost no headway at all,' concedes 'that the adoption by the public of any general, radical, phonetic system is one of the most improbable things that can be imagined,' and declares that the only practical thing for the reformers to attempt is a series of gradual modifications *in* the language — stimulating by conscious effort the sort of transformation that has been working itself out instinctively during the past three centuries.

If spelling-reformers in general would adopt this moderate position, there would be little serious disagreement among thinking men. Mr. Horace E. Scudder, speaking of Webster's unsuccessful effort to create a new language 'made in America,' justly says: 'Language is not a toy or patent machine, which can be broken, thrown aside at will, and replaced with a better tool, ready-made from the lexicographer's shop. He had no conception of the enormous weight of the English language and literature, when he undertook to shovel it out of the path of American civilization. The stars in their courses fought against him.'

It may safely be said that English spelling will continue to undergo the sort of modification in the direction of rationality that has marked its development in the past, and at a probably accelerated rate. And it may be said with equal safety that no other sort of change is possible. It is our own opinion that no other sort of change is, all things considered, desirable, and that each simplified spelling proposed must be judged upon its own merits, submitting to a test in which feeling and instinct are given as much weight as logic, before it shall receive permanent acceptance in our speech. 'There are,' to quote from Mr. Smith once more, 'in the variations of our existing orthography allowed by the dictionaries and in the occasional innovations of influential writers which are accepted by the public without any jarring of the nerves, the beginnings of a movement which, if continued along its own lines and gradually pushed to a consistent conclusion, will result in a vast simplification and rationalizing of our language.'



IN MEMORIAM

JOHN RUSKIN.

WITHIN a few days of the completion of his eighty-first year, death crowned the labors of John Ruskin, and he entered the company of the immortals. There is no Englishman of his intellectual and moral stature left alive; his peers have all gone before him, and the last of the great spirits who shaped for the Victorian age its ethical and æsthetical ideals has been gathered to his rest.

‘As he willed, he worked:

And, as he worked, he wanted not, be sure,
Triumph his whole life through, submitting work
To work’s right judges, never to the wrong,
To competency, not ineptitude.’

His life was so complete, so filled with manifold serviceable activities, so rich in the garner of life’s best fruits, that we cannot deplore his death, however sincere our mourning, but must rather be touched with a deep solemnity at the thought of what he did and what he was, mingled with a deep gratitude for the example of his consecrated

days. His work for mankind was ended a full decade ago, and the peaceful hours that were given him after his pen had been laid aside removed him so entirely from any sort of contact with the active world that his continued bodily presence among men has been difficult to realize.

‘The soul that’s tutelary now

Till time end, o’er the world to teach and bless’

has seemed to us hardly more than a disembodied spirit since the year when those ‘Præterita’ which we were reading with such eager interest met with their final interruption, and became themselves things of that past with which they were concerned.

John Ruskin was born in London on the eighth of February, 1819. He died on the twentieth of January, 1900, at his Lake Country home, Brantwood, in Coniston, where something like the last score of his years were spent. His intellectual activity covers a period of nearly sixty years, for his precocity was marked, and he wrote creditable verses at the age of ten or thereabouts. At fifteen we find him contributing to a periodical of popular science papers with such titles as ‘Enquiries on the Causes of the Color

of the Water of the Rhine' and 'Facts and Considerations on the Strata of Mont Blanc.' From this time until his physical breakdown at the age of seventy, there is no year that does not add its title or titles to the bibliography of his writings, the mere list of which, without comment, would nearly, if not quite, fill up all the space here at our command. And what memories these titles evoke in the minds of men and women to whom the message of Ruskin has come as a veritable new gospel of beauty and the conduct of life! They think of 'Modern Painters,' 'The Stones of Venice,' 'The Seven Lamps of Architecture,' and recall the quickened vision, the new appreciation, the deepened insight, which the reading of these books has brought them when viewing the cities and the galleries of Europe. They think of 'Sesame and Lilies' and 'The Queen of the Air,' and recall the stimulus and the fresh inspiration that these books have brought to the study of literature. They think of 'The Crown of Wild Olive' and 'The Ethics of the Dust,' and recall their realization of the unity of truth and goodness and beauty, their first sense of the fashion in which the cul-

tivated intelligence apprehends the most diverse of phenomena as related to the same central set of ideals, in thought welding beauty to utility, and art to the practical conduct of life. They think of 'Munera Pulveris' and 'Unto This Last,' and recall the heightened sense of social solidarity which they derived from these books, the view of human intercourse as a complex of mutual obligations, the doctrine of duties applied as a corrective to the doctrine of rights. Finally, they think of 'Fors Clavigera' and 'Præterita,' and recall the unselfish character and single-hearted devotion to the service of humanity which these books so unconsciously portray, while love and reverence for the writer become blended into one emotion of thankfulness for all of his gifts to mankind, the most precious of them all being the gift of himself.

Ruskin's career has two well-defined periods. During the first, he was essentially a teacher of art; during the second, he was essentially a teacher of ethics. The year 1860 marks the grand climacteric of his life, for it saw the completion of 'Modern Painters' and the inauguration, with 'Unto this Last,' of the long series of the writ-

ings which are concerned with men in their social relations. When the turning-point was reached, he was about forty years of age, he had become the foremost writer of his time upon the subject of the fine arts, he had forced an unwilling public to recognize the genius of the great landscape painter of England, he had become the interpreter of Giotto, and Tintoretto, and many other great artists hitherto imperfectly appreciated or not at all, he had espoused the cause of the Pre-Raphaelites, given effective aid to their propaganda, and had befriended them individually when help was most grateful, he had made himself one of the greatest masters of English prose, thereby increasing tenfold his influence as a critic of art, he had, finally, been called upon to bear his portion of the private grief which is the common lot of men, and the brief chapter of his domestic happiness had come to an end. His work done in the field of art criticism has called forth an enormous amount of discussion, in the form of both approval and dissent. At first, his opinions excited violent antagonism ; then, for a period, the force of his eloquence seemed to carry everything before it ; then, again, a marked reaction set in,

and a deliberate effort was made to belittle his achievements and minimize his influence. We do not think that the two parties to this controversy have ever joined issue fairly and squarely. We may allow the justice of much that has been said by his hostile critics, — by Mr. Stillman, for example, and Dr. Waldstein, — yet admit almost to the full what has been claimed for him by the most earnest of his champions. Both parties are right, in some sense. For the attack, we may say that his specific judgments were often wrong, that his bestowal of praise was exaggerated beyond all reason, that his advice to painters was frequently impracticable, and that his influence upon contemporary artists was slight. But for the defence we must also say something. We must say, for example, that he made the general English public think more seriously about art than it had ever done before. We must say that his writings opened eyes by the thousands that had hitherto been blind, and, if those eyes did not see just what he would have had them see, they were at least opened to some kind of truth that would not have been revealed to them at all except for his influence. We must say, also,

that he gave to the pursuit and study of art a dignity that it had never known before, by virtue of his constant insistence upon the relation of art to morality, his unalterable determination to judge of artistic work from other standpoints than the narrow one of technique, and the prophetic fervor with which he proclaimed the gospel, not of art for art's sake, but of art for the sake of man's temporal delight and eternal salvation.

The change that came over the complexion of Ruskin's thought in his early forties was very marked. He had outgrown the narrowness of his early beliefs, his sympathies had broadened, he had learned that life was more than art, he had resolved to do what he might to bring practical counsel and effective help to his fellow-men. At first, and for ten years or thereabouts, he confined himself for the most part to his writings, which soon acquired for themselves a range that they had not known before; then, with the fortune which had come to him upon the death of his father, and which he felt that he was to hold in trust only, he set about doing things; he began the publication of the '*Fors Clavigera*,' and instituted the Guild of St. George. In the

first letter of 'Fors,' he thus stated his programme in general terms :

'I am not an unselfish person, nor an Evangelical one; I have no particular pleasure in doing good; neither do I dislike doing it so much as to expect to be rewarded for it in another world. But I simply cannot paint, nor read, nor look at minerals, nor do anything else that I like, and the very light of the morning sky, when there is any — which is seldom, now-a-days, near London — has become hateful to me, because of the misery that I know of, and see signs of, where I know it not, which no imagination can interpret too bitterly. Therefore, as I have said, I will endure it no longer quietly; but henceforward, with any few or many who will help, do my poor best to abate this misery.'

That so radical a programme as Ruskin marked out for his declining years was foredoomed to failure, as far as practical outcome was concerned, must have appeared manifest to any temperate observer. He sought to reconstruct English society, to counteract the combined forces of democratic impulse and economic law, to restore to the nineteenth century the ideals of the thirteenth. A few only of the items in this programme may be specified. Railways were to be done away with, and labor-saving machinery abandoned. The taking of interest was to be held sinful, and the *régime* of status was to re-

place the *régime* of contract. Individual impulse was to be suppressed by the weight of a restored social hierarchy. The whole system of popular education was to be made over upon essentially mediæval lines. These things, and many more like unto them, were urged with all the ingenuity of argument and eloquence of appeal at the author's command, and, as far as might be, he put these things into practical effect in his own life, and in the lives of those over whom he had any sort of control.

No summary in the bare outline form just attempted is really fair to Ruskin. The stupendous wrongheadedness of such a programme, so stated, merely repels, and we would not repel a single possible reader from even the most practically impossible of the books wherein the parts of this programme are set forth. The attitude of the sane intelligence toward these teachings is expressed by Mr. Frederic Harrison when he says: 'In one sense, no doubt, I stand at an opposite pole of ideas, and in literal and direct words, I could hardly adopt any one of the leading doctrines of his creed. As to mine, he probably rejects everything I hold sacred and

true with violent indignation and scorn.' 'Yet in spite of this divergence of positive belief, Mr. Harrison has made the author the subject of one of the most glowing panegyrics ever penned, and he expresses what we believe will remain the deliberate judgment of mankind when he goes on to speak in the following strain :

'Some day, perhaps, a future generation will be able to take up these outpourings of the spirit, not to criticise and condemn what they find there to dispute or to laugh at, but in the way in which sensible men read Plato's "Republic," or the book of Ezekiel, or Dante's "Vita Nuova," to enjoy the melody of the language, the inspiring poetry, and their apocalyptic visions, without being disturbed in the least by all that is mystical, fantastical, impossible in the ideal of humanity they present.'

In a word, the balance of Ruskin's teachings, whatever specific vagaries they may embody, will rest upon the side of progress, of ethical inspiration, of worthy human activity, of all that is desirable for the uplifting of the race. In this belief, we would earnestly recommend the most extreme of his books, even 'Unto this Last,' and the many volumes of the 'Fors Clavigera,' not indeed as the best food for untrained minds, but as a helpful influence to the cultivated intelligence, as a needed corrective for all that is

unspiritual and materialistic in the thought of the age. Their essential teaching is at one with that of the great leaders of man's ethical and religious thought, and their perversity of utterance no more than an accident powerless to work lasting injury. The gift of communion with such a spirit is one of the most precious that literature can offer, and a deep sense of gratitude, of reverent affection, is what remains to us unshaken, after all possible exceptions have been taken, after all needful allowances have been made, when we think of the great work and the noble life that ended in the closing year of the century to which they lent so imperishable a lustre.

WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE.

IT is not often that the closing days of a great career compel the grief and sympathy of the whole civilized world. There are so many great men in so many departments of human activity, while the interests of observers are so specialized and varied, that one must occupy an extraordinarily commanding position to exact from all classes the tribute of attention, even under circumstances that make unusual demands upon the sympathies. That something like this triumph was achieved by Mr. Gladstone is evident from the widespread eagerness with which the course of his fatal disease, and the pathetic sufferings attendant upon it, were followed by all kinds of readers, and the abundance of eulogy that was set free by the news of his final release. The last remaining member of the remarkable group of men fortuitously associated by the year of their common birth, his popular renown was perhaps greater than that of any of the others,

although it may hardly be doubted that the verdict of 'them who know,' as registered by the posterity of the twentieth century, will assign to Lincoln a higher place in the making of history, to Tennyson and Darwin higher places in the development of thought. But at the time of his death we were so impressed with the towering personality of the English statesman, and felt so keenly the loss of his leadership, that the critical sense became deadened, and the temptation was well-nigh irresistible to join in the journalistic chorus of praise in which his life-work was reviewed.

To the critic determined upon unrelieved eulogy there is, indeed, in the career of Gladstone material enough to inspire the most sluggish to panegyric, achievement to the credit of the man himself and to humanity at large sufficient to give pause to the voice of detraction and permit the laurel-wreath of fame to rest unquestioned upon his brow. The memory of his eloquence, the devotion inspired by his leadership, his splendid humanitarian endeavor in behalf of oppressed peoples, his unexampled mastery of financial and other administrative problems, his instinct for righteousness in both

public and private life, his unswerving devotion to the ideals which seemed to him worthy, however mistaken some of them may have been, his almost complete exemption from the human failings that so often add a touch of pettiness to the lives of the most exalted, — all these things offer the strongest possible temptation to deal with his memory in the spirit of the old adage that bids us speak nothing but good concerning the dead. In this case, at least, there is no danger of providing a new illustration of the Shakespearian lines, —

‘The evil that men do lives after them,
The good is oft interred with their bones.’

The danger is rather that eulogy will become so indiscriminate as to make claims for Gladstone that cannot possibly be justified, that his intellectual defects will be for the time forgotten in the generous glow of feeling with which his career is commemorated.

The public life of Gladstone will receive its final appraisal from the impartial historian far on in the coming century. It is safe to say that this appraisal will be far removed from the laudatory extreme of the present day when

the sense of his loss is fresh in our hearts, and from the extreme of dispraise which his famous *volte-face* of 1886 then evoked from most of the men among his contemporaries where opinions had real weight. That his plan for the settlement of the Irish agitation would, if successfully carried out, have sown the seeds of disintegration in the Constitution of the United Kingdom, we firmly believe; but the violence with which he was assailed for his advocacy of that plan, and the passionate way in which his motives were then impugned, did little credit to his opponents, and afforded a melancholy illustration of the extremes to which the partisan spirit may pervert the judgment. The degree and quality of Gladstone's statesmanship remain yet to be weighed in the impartial scales of dispassionate criticism; and this it is no more possible to do at the present time than it would have been fifteen years ago, for the balance which would then have tipped far too much on the one side would just now incline far too much upon the other. Meanwhile, we may express the opinion that the estimate made by Matthew Arnold not long before the death of that writer, published in one of the reviews,

will in the end prove to have come as near as any contemporary estimate to the judgment of posterity. It has been too much the fashion to speak slightly of Arnold's judgment in extra-literary matters, but his memory will in time come to its own in this regard, and it will be understood upon how many matters of political and religious significance he held the scales of even-handed justice.

The twentieth century will not find it altogether easy to account for Gladstone's hold upon the nineteenth century. It will have to accept the fact as unquestionable, but the explanation will prove puzzling. He will be remembered as a Great Commoner, somewhat as the elder Pitt is now remembered, and men will turn to his speeches to penetrate the secret of his power. But in those speeches they will find little to remind them of the eloquence with which Pitt appeals to us even now from the printed page. They will find, rather, a diffuse and common style, often weighty in matter, but without wings to soar. The irony of the familiar phrase, *littera scripta manet*, will be deeply felt when these dull periods are contrasted with the tradition of their

framer's eloquence. For Gladstone was, beyond doubt, one of the most eloquent speakers who have ever moved legislatures. But to the student of a hundred years from now, while the written word will indeed remain for his examination, the moral fervor that made the word vital when spoken will have been long since chilled, and the personality that made the word impressive will have become but a dim memory. How marked is the contrast between the case of Gladstone and the case of Burke. The ineffectual oratory of the eighteenth-century statesman had no charm for the sense, but the speeches that he delivered to empty benches have taken their place for all time in the literature of the world. Delivered to inattentive ears, the depth of their political wisdom and the gorgeous embroidery of their style have made them an inexhaustible source of inspiration to all succeeding generations. The speeches of Gladstone, on the other hand, for half a century compelled the attention of crowds of eager listeners, but their power to sway died with the breath that gave them life, and the statesman of the future will turn to them neither for guidance nor for inspiration.

What is true of Gladstone's speeches considered as literary productions is also true of the great mass of other printed material furnished forth by his busy pen. It is with regard to this phase of his activity more than any other that the day-laborers of the press, as Schopenhauer calls journalists, have shown a total lack of critical discrimination. They have simply taken for granted that so great a man must be great in whatever he undertakes, and have entertained and spread abroad — honestly enough, no doubt — the notion that Gladstone was a distinguished writer and a profound thinker. Nothing could be farther removed from the truth than this opinion. One may search his voluminous writings in vain for anything like high distinction in expression, while scholars in most of the special fields into which he sometimes made excursions have almost always refused to take him seriously. When they were occasionally persuaded so to take him, as in the case of his famous controversy with Huxley, the result was much to his discomfiture. He was hardly more fortunate in his Homeric studies than in his championship of an old-fashioned theology against natural science

and the higher criticism. He possessed a vast store of minute information upon historical and ecclesiastical subjects, but even the great length of his years did not bring the philosophic mind in the best sense, and he always displayed an extraordinary instinct for the exploration of 'blind leads' in theological and humanistic discussion. These diversions of his literary activity, as distinguished from his really solid work in the fields of financial, administrative, and political science, are for the most part hopelessly futile; they have produced no more than a few ripples in the current of serious thought, and they have no anti-septic of style to protect them from decay.

A man who wrote so much as Gladstone, yet in his writing could never attain to any higher literary qualities than a certain sincerity of purpose and quiet dignity, whose manner was habitually diffuse and frequently commonplace, could hardly be expected to display a delicate critical sense in dealing with literature in general. Omnivorous reader that he was, it was evidently the matter of books that he prized rather than the form of its expression. One never knew what kind of a new book would receive his

approval, and be launched upon the sea of an ephemeral fame by one of his famous post-cards. He never outgrew the didactic ideal of literature, and the didacticism of a book, in order to win his favor, must conform pretty closely to a rather narrow set of traditional lines. Poetry, to be really great, must have fairly definite religious implications, and the norm of these implications must not depart very far from the standards of the Church of England. His interest in the Homeric epic, for example, derived much of its strength from fancied analogies between the Hellenic and Hebraic ideals, and he displayed all his ingenuity in seeking to establish such a synthesis. A typical passage from one of his essays speaks of 'the solid and consistent wisdom which can feel no other firm foundation in the heart of man than the Gospel Revelation, without which, even while we feel the poet to be an enchanter, we cannot accept and trust him as a guide; and of which Wordsworth is an example unequaled probably in our age and unsurpassed in any age preceding ours.' Gladstone's essential attitude toward literature is expressed, and its limitations clearly emphasized, in the words above quoted,

and in the elaboration of their thought which follows.

‘The highest functions of the human being stand in such intimate relations to one another that the patent want of any one of them will commonly prevent the attainment of perfection in any other. The sense of beauty enters into the highest philosophy, as in Plato. The highest poet must be a philosopher, accomplished like Dante, or intuitive like Shakespeare. But neither the one nor the other can now exist in separation from that conception of the relations between God and man, that new standard and pattern of humanity, which Christianity has supplied. It is true, indeed, that much of what it has indelibly impressed upon the imagination and understanding, the heart and life of man, may be traceable and even prominent in those who individually disown it. The splendor of these disappropriate gifts in particular cases may be among the very greatest of the signs and wonders appointed for the trial of faith. Yet there is always something in them to show that they have with them no source of positive permanent vitality; that the branch has been torn from the tree, and that its life is on the wane.’

FREDERICK MAX MÜLLER.

THE death of Max Müller brought up again the old question concerning the importance of the popularizer as an agent for the advancement of science, and set once more in sharp contrast the attitudes respectively assumed toward such a man by the reading public and the body of quiet scientific workers. Max Müller, like Renan, Froude, Huxley, and Tyndall — to name only a few of his famous contemporaries — had in pre-eminent degree the gift of style, the charm of graceful literary art, and the power to interest ordinary minds in subjects not easily forced upon their attention. This was at once his bane as a scholar and the secret of his popular success. Transferring our attention for a moment from the individual to the group which he so typically illustrated, we must say that the attitude toward such men of those critics who stand for the methods of pure science is apt to be very ungracious, being compounded of no small amount

of intellectual arrogance, and even of envy, mingled with the more legitimate elements that derive from the sense of superior knowledge and firmer hold upon the facts. In the view of the extremer devotees of pure science, it becomes a misdemeanor to write attractively, and a felony to achieve popularity with the laity. Sometimes, as was notably true in the case of Renan, the offence is reckoned so great that the offender receives only the most grudging sort of recognition from his fellow-workers in the same field, although in their hearts they are conscious that he stands abreast of the strongest of them, even when judged by the most exacting standards. He has ventured to be popular, and the fact that he has remained rigorously scientific does not remove the stigma in the eyes of those self-constituted guardians of scholarship.

Max Müller was far from being a philologist and a student of comparative religion in the sense in which Renan was both, and his intellectual armor was doubtless vulnerable at many points; nevertheless, it is unquestionably true that he accomplished much work of solid value, and deserved well of science for his services. That

science, especially as represented by the younger school of men trained at the German universities, has done him something less than justice, is a fact that must be admitted by the impartial observer. If he failed in accuracy of knowledge, if he could not overcome certain intellectual prejudices, if he did not keep abreast of the scholarship of his time, his was still a larger personality than that of many a critic who assailed him, and who, without one-tenth of his actual accomplishment, affected to hold his authority beneath serious consideration.

Max Müller was born in Dessau in 1823, and was a son of the poet Wilhelm Müller. The artistic temperament which was thus his birth-right came near to making of him a musician instead of a scholar, and resulted in at least one piece of purely literary composition, the 'Deutsche Liebe' of his youth, an exquisite bit of refined sentimentalism long familiar to English readers in the translation entitled 'Memories.' He studied Sanskrit at Leipzig, and translated the 'Hitopadesa' at the age of twenty-one. Continuing his Sanskrit studies under Bopp and Burnouf, he went to England in 1846 for the

purpose of editing the 'Rig-Veda,' a commission given him by the East India Company. This great undertaking, which was, however, in considerable part performed by another hand, occupied him largely for nearly thirty years, the last of the six volumes being dated as late as 1874. He made his home at Oxford, and became successively a member, a fellow, a sub-librarian, and a professor of the University. In 1875, he practically resigned his chair, and gave his chief attention to the work of editing 'The Sacred Books of the East,' a series that eventually numbered thirty or forty volumes. Among the almost innumerable publications of his busy half-century of writing, mention should be made of his 'Lectures on the Science of Language,' his 'Chips from a German Workshop,' his 'History of Sanskrit Literature,' his Hibbert lectures on 'The Origin and Growth of Religions,' and his 'Science of Thought.' Nor should we fail to include in this list the translation of Kant's 'Kritik der Reinen Vernunft,' which he made upon the occasion of the centenary of that great work, and which is so significant of his constant adherence to the Kantian system and

the Kantian method of envisaging philosophical problems. His fifty and more years of Oxford life were comparatively uneventful, save for the delivery of his lectures, the publication of his books, and the honors bestowed upon him by potentates and by learned societies. Strange to say, this life-long student of Indian thought and language never visited the land which engaged so large a share of his attention. He was one of the most famous of Orientalists, but he never set foot in an Oriental country.

Müller rode his hobbies very hard, and perhaps the hardest ridden of them all was his way of accounting for mythology as a disease of language. Finding the names of the Greek and Hindu deities to be words traceable to the phenomena of nature,—the sun, the sky, and the clouds,—he theorized to the effect that all mythology resulted from primitive descriptions of natural objects, the sense in which the words were used gradually becoming modified into metaphorical meanings, until the literal signification of the terms had been quite forgotten. This seemed to be a key that would fit almost any of the locks of folklore and popular theology, and

with it he sought to reveal the innermost secrets of the classical and Oriental cosmogonies. It was a very popular theory a generation ago, and had things its own way with the general public. It was so easy, and at the same time so pleasing to the poetic sense, to reduce every primitive belief to some variation of the omnipresent solar myth that readers were quite captivated by the notion. But the thing was overdone, and a sense of humor began to exert its corrosive action upon this too pleasing theory, until solar myths lost their favor, and few are now so poor as to do them reverence.

Müller had many quarrels and controversies in his special field of Sanskrit, and in the wider field of comparative philology, but these need not concern us here. His one great quarrel with modern scientific thought was based upon his view of the origin of human speech. During the sixties and seventies, when Darwinism was having pretty much its own way with most classes of thinkers, from naturalists to philosophers, it encountered what seemed to be a very ugly snag in the opposition of Müller, based upon strictly philological grounds. The theory of

evolution seemed to offer no way of accounting for the beginning of intelligible speech, and although Darwinians were convinced that this difficulty could not be a real one, they were nevertheless put to their wits' ends to deal with it as it was presented in Müller's cogent argument. The process of development, he said, could readily enough be traced back to the roots of a language, but there it seemed to stick. The Aryan roots were perfectly definite symbols for definite concepts, and they seemed to have no reasonably imaginable antecedents. 'There they are, gentlemen,' he said in substance, 'and what are you going to do about it?' The 'bow-wow' theory, which ascribed to them an onomatopoetic character, was too childish for serious consideration, and the 'pooh-pooh' theory, which sought to explain them as the primitive symbols of emotional conditions, was quite inadequate to account for them. During his later years, Müller himself seemed to feel that his negative attitude toward the most pregnant conception of modern philosophy was hardly becoming a man of science, and he came to realize that the mere lack of a reasonable theory of the origin of language was

not enough to make men believe that it had no rational origin. His own view became considerably modified by the speculations of Professor Noiré, and he accepted the 'yo-heave-ho' theory, which accounted for the mysterious roots as a product of the *clamor concomitans* of men engaged in common labor, as providing at least a provisional method for the solution of the problem.

As a matter of fact, this problem, as well as the allied problem of accounting for thought without language, no longer seems as formidable as it did a generation ago. The doctrine of evolution carries with it the absolute necessity for the evolution of speech by some natural process, and the exact nature of that process is a matter of detail that science may safely be trusted to make clear. As for Müller's contention that thought is impossible without language, it may be said that Whitney's acute polemic assailed it with considerable success a generation ago, and that the natural psychology of the past score of years, as contrasted with the artificial psychology of an earlier period, has made it evident that thought and language are parallel developments, to neither of which can any absolute priority be

assigned. Perhaps the clearest exposition of this scientific view is that made by Romanes about fifteen years ago. In this, as in many other matters, Müller's intellect never quite escaped from the metaphysical stage of development, a fact which is best illustrated by his thoroughgoing acceptance of the Kantian philosophy as the final expression of metaphysical thought. 'That last infirmity of the philosophic mind,' as the 'Kantian superstition' is styled by Professor Shorey, stiffened to the end the intellectual processes of the brilliant scholar whose death we now deplore, and impeded their free and natural operation. There is no reproach in this, but there is some occasion for regret that a thinker of Müller's capacity should have been kept many years behind his age by the trammels of a system that had long since accomplished its work.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

OF the six great poets whose names stand pre-eminent in the later Victorian era, five have gone to their rest, and the solitary figure of Mr. Swinburne alone remains to bear aloft the torch of the singer. Rossetti died in 1882, Arnold in 1888, Browning in 1889, Tennyson in 1892; and in 1896 'the idle singer of an empty day,' as William Morris styled himself with modesty no less excessive than that which prompted Keats in the suggestion of his own epitaph, ceased from life, and entered into the inheritance of fame that he shares with Chaucer and Boccaccio, with the creators of Norse saga and mediæval French romance. The death of these five men one after another, without the appearance of any new poet comparable with the least of them, has practically established the contention made many years ago by Mr. Stedman, that a well-marked period in English poetry was drawing to its close with the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

The affinities of Morris are with Rossetti and Mr. Swinburne, rather than with Arnold, Browning, or Tennyson ; and the public early learned to associate the three poets first named, not only with one another, but also with the movement in English painting of which Rossetti was one of the chief glories. These men, painters and poets alike, have been variously described as Pre-Raphaelites, members of the stained-glass school, apostles of mediævalism and of Renaissance art. No one of the epithets is exact or comprehensive, but all are at least suggestive of the aims and methods of the extraordinary group of men of genius to whom they are applied. And of the three poets concerned it is to be noted that Morris was the first to make himself heard. 'The Defence of Guenevere' was published in 1858 ; three years later came Rossetti's 'Early Italian Poets,' and Mr. Swinburne's 'Rosamond' and 'The Queen Mother.' It was not until 1870 that Rossetti's first collection of original poems was exhumed from the grave of his wife and given to the world. When we examine the total poetical product of the three men, we find a wide differentiation of achievement, although a

common impulse and common sympathies may be detected at their starting-points. The dramatic genius, the political and ethical passion, displayed by Mr. Swinburne in his maturer work, are without a parallel in the work of Morris; nor did the latter long remain trammelled by the mysticism and the spiritual subtlety that were characteristic of Rossetti's poetry to the last. As for comparison with Arnold, Browning, and Tennyson, it is clean out of the question. These men felt the whole burden of the modern world, were oppressed by its enigmas, and looked toward the future rather than the past. Morris, on the other hand, found all his inspiration in the past, and the golden age of which he sang was envisaged as a reversion rather than as a progressive evolution. 'Dreamer of dreams, born out of my due time,' he called himself; and, man of affairs that he became and remained to outward seeming, his inner life was always attuned to the simpler harmonies of the naïve older world.

The plan and craftsmanship of 'The Earthly Paradise,' the work by which Morris is best known, are such as to make inevitable some comparison with 'The Canterbury Tales,' and

the author has frequently been described as a modern Chaucer. The ascription of this title has a certain rough external value, but little more. Certainly we may say that 'The Earthly Paradise' is the only work in all English literature to challenge comparison with 'The Canterbury Tales.' Nearly five hundred years had to elapse after the death of Chaucer before England could produce his peer as a story-teller by right divine. But the similarity does not extend far beyond this fact. Chaucer's tales were in their essence prophetic rather than retrospective; they heralded the coming glories of English literature, they were in a sense the precursors of the Elizabethan drama and the modern novel. The tales told by Morris have in common with them little except the qualities of easy rhythm and noble diction that belong to all great poetry, and the fact that they are tales and not subjective outpourings. Of the wit, the shrewdness, the practical good sense, the dramatic faculty, and the insight into the recesses of individual character displayed by Chaucer, there is very little to be found in Morris; but we find instead the conception of men as types rather than individuals, the fresh

and simple outlook upon nature, the very breath and finer spirit of all romance. We find, too, a curious blend of Hellenism with mediævalism, or rather an amalgam of the elements of pure beauty common to both styles, the objectivity, the simplicity, and the grace of an art hardly tinged with self-consciousness and innocent of any concealed ulterior motive.

Pure beauty may indeed be taken as the note of all the poetry that William Morris has left for the enrichment of our literature. 'Full of soft music and familiar olden charm,' to use Mr. Stedman's felicitous phrase, it has the power to lull the senses into forgetfulness of this modern workaday world, to restore the soul with draughts from the wellsprings of life, to bring back the wonder of childhood, the glory and the dream that we may perhaps have thought to be vanished beyond recall. It is poetry to read in the long summer days when we seek rest from strenuous endeavor; it is poetry for the beguilement of all weariness, and for the refreshment of our faith in the simple virtues and the unsophisticated life; it is poetry that brings a wholesome and healing ministry akin to that of Nature herself; it is

poetry that leaves the recollection unsullied by any suggestion of impurity and unhaunted by any spectre of doubt. Like Lethe, it has the gift of oblivion for those who seek the embrace of its waters; but, unlike the dark-flowing stream of the underworld, its surface is rippled by the breezes of earth, its banks are overarched by living foliage, and its waves mirror the glad sunlight. This rich treasure of song includes the tentative first volume of miscellaneous poems, the great epic of 'The Life and Death of Jason,' the twenty-four tales of the wanderers who sought, but did not find, 'The Earthly Paradise,' the 'morality' of 'Love is Enough,' the story of 'Sigurd the Volsung,' and the volume of 'Poems by the Way.' To this list we should also add the versions of the 'Odyssey' and the 'Æneid,' which are great English poems, whatever may be said of them as translations.

We have thus far made no mention of the group of works in which the genius of the poet found a new medium of expression during the last few years of his life. There is nothing in English literature sufficiently like them to be put in the same class with the series of seven books

that began with 'The House of the Wolfings' and ended with 'The Sundering Flood,' posthumously published. These romances mingle formal poetry with a sort of poetic prose that has all the qualities of poetry save metre, and that does not err — this is a very important point — by any approach to rhythmical regularity. Mr. Watts-Dunton says the final word upon the subject :

‘While the poet’s object is to arouse in the listener an expectancy of cæsuric effects, the great goal before the writer of poetic prose is in the very opposite direction; it is to make use of the concrete figures and impassioned diction that are the poet’s vehicle, but at the same time to avoid the expectancy of metrical bars. The moment that the regular bars assert themselves and lead the reader’s ear to expect other bars of the like kind, sincerity ends.’

Of poetic prose in the true sense are these romances chiefly made, and their beauty is as absolute, in its own way, as the beauty of the avowed poems. We may speak of these books as a class by repeating what we said some years ago in a review of one of them — ‘The Story of the Glittering Plain.’ ‘The reader of Mr. Morris’s first volume of poems might have discerned therein glimpses of the author’s affinities for an

art even less sophisticated than the Chaucerian, and of the ideals of a still more primitive age. The subsequent development of the author's genius has made this clear enough, and the types of thought and speech which he has delighted to embody have grown more and more archaic and remote. He has found the true springtime of the world, not even in the poems of Homer, but in the sagas of Iceland, in the conditions of Teutonic life of which Tacitus affords us a glimpse, and in the still more primeval regions which myth and folk-lore enable us to penetrate. And he has developed a style in keeping with the life which he depicts, a style which has permitted him to translate the saga literature as it was never translated before, a style of severe and noble simplicity from which the Latin element of the language is all but wholly banished.'

In the foregoing characterization of Morris, he has been considered simply as an English man of letters, with no reference to the many activities that he associated with the pursuit of literature. In a strict sense, of course, poetry was his avocation, just as it was with Oliver Wendell Holmes; but the world will remember

the poet in both cases long after it has forgotten the professor of medicine and the master of decorative design. Yet if Morris had written no books he would have been one of the most noteworthy men of his time, and his labors in the field of the practical arts would have earned for him the warmest gratitude of all who are struggling to make the world better worth living in. In the department of household decoration he did much to develop the public taste for books that are mechanically works of art; as the advocate of what are probably impossible ideals of social organization, he did much to stimulate the moral sense of Englishmen, and persuade them that ours is by no means the best of all possible civilizations. He lived a great and a good life, in the best sense a life of service to mankind, and his death was a loss which it would be difficult to exaggerate.

WILLIAM BLACK.

THE popular novelist who is the subject of this sketch was born in Glasgow, in 1841, and had attained the age of fifty-seven years at the time of his death in 1898. His education was somewhat irregular, and he never went through the public school and university courses which prepare for their work most Englishmen who attain intellectual distinction. Instead, he was taught in private institutions, and, his early leanings being in the direction of art, he spent two years in the Government Art School of his native city. 'As an artist,' he says, 'I was a complete failure, and so qualified myself for a time in after life as art critic.' But it must be remarked, as a corrective to his own humorous self-depreciation, that his insight into the artistic temperament is one of the characteristic features of his literary work, and that, if success in landscape painting upon the canvas was beyond his reach, few writers have ever been so successful in the

verbal painting of landscape. The impression of natural beauty, as conveyed by hundreds of descriptive pages scattered through his novels, is deep and lasting; one of the chief causes of our indebtedness to him is his joy in the changeful moods of nature, in which he has made every one of his readers share.

When Black made the discovery that he could write better than he could paint, he found in journalism the doorway to literature, as so many others have done, and became connected with the London 'Morning Star.' This was in 1865, when Mr. Justin McCarthy was the editor of that journal. He served the 'Star' as special correspondent at the time of the war between Prussia and Austria. Soon thereafter he became a member of the 'Daily News' editorial staff, occupying that post for several years, and writing leaders upon the politics and questions of the day. Meanwhile, he was fledging his wings as a novelist; and in 1867 'Love or Marriage' was published in the conventional three-volume form. This was soon followed by 'In Silk Attire,' and this by 'Kilmeny,' a beautiful and pathetic story, written during the period of se-

clusion that followed the double bereavement caused by the death of his wife and his child. In 1871 'A Daughter of Heth' appeared, and its author leaped into popularity with the wider public that had known nothing of his preceding books. This sudden accession of fame found abundant warrant in the work to which it was due, for 'A Daughter of Heth' was not only vastly superior to anything that had come before it, but was to remain the highest artistic achievement of the writer. When we now look back to it, we look along the vista of more than a score of novels that have followed it, and we find no one of them as completely satisfying, symmetrical, and artistic in the finest sense.

The story of Black's life during the seventies, eighties, and nineties, is the story of his books, and nothing more. Even his trip to the United States, in the early seventies, calls for no comment beyond the statement that it inspired 'Green Pastures and Picadilly,' and possibly the further observation that from this time on the novelist's heroines became somewhat alarmingly addicted to humor of the American rather than the English type. For the rest, his seasons, like

those of his heroes, alternated between the drawing-rooms and clubs of London and the coasts and moors of the Highlands that he loved so well. The one serious book that he wrote was the life of Goldsmith contributed to the 'English Men of Letters' series in 1879. The novels, as we have said, number upwards of a score, for hardly a year passed after he began to write them that has not added one or two to the list.

Among all these fictions, some are so lamentably weak that they had far better have remained unwritten. Probably 'That Beautiful Wretch' represents the lowest plane upon which it was possible for Black's talent to work. Many others must be considered pot-boilers and nothing more. Still others are the merest replicas, as to motive, situations, and accessories, of his early successes, and nothing more need be said of them. But there remains a residuum of work, including perhaps half a dozen titles, which cannot be ignored in any survey of Victorian literature, and upon which the author's fame will ultimately rest. Of 'A Daughter of Heth' we have already spoken, and 'A Princess of Thule' must be placed on

nearly the same level in a comparative estimate of Black's novels. In 'Judith Shakespeare' he acquitted himself of a peculiarly delicate task with rare tact and restraint. Its glimpses of the homely life of that spacious age in which the poet lived, and of the poet himself in his character as a prosperous citizen of Stratford, are altogether charming, and display unfailing taste. When 'Sunrise' appeared, many among the novelist's following rubbed their eyes at this strange new departure, for here Black deserted his wonted haunts and familiar characters to write a romance on the European revolutionary movement, a romance filled with plottings and dark secrets, a romance inspired by the 'Songs before Sunrise' that, a few years previously, had revealed in Mr. Swinburne so great a lyrical gift as had not been known since Shelley. But 'Sunrise' was only a 'sport' among the author's writings, and he at once reverted to his earlier manner and his well-worn themes. Among the remaining novels, there are none that stand out from the others quite as distinctly as the four that we have named. The tragic gloom that enwraps the ending of 'Macleod of Dare' makes

the reader remember it rather better than its fellows, and the more gracious aspects of the novelist's talent are perhaps better displayed than elsewhere in such books as 'White Wings' and 'White Heather.' But we will make no more invidious comparisons. We have read with some gratitude even the feeblest of these novels, and with much gratitude the best of them. They have provided sweet and wholesome entertainment for many an idle hour, and we reflect with genuine sorrow that the source of this entertainment is now dried up forever.

It is related that Carlyle once said to Black, in the course of a conversation: 'Ay, ay, ye ken our Scotland weel, but tell me, mon, when are ye gaun to do some wark?' Souls of the strenuous sort, who expect novelists to deal with the serious problems of society, and who insist upon the ethical motive, if not upon the didactical method, will not find their account in the novels of William Black, unless they think of him solely as the author of 'Sunrise.' Such souls have their Mr. Meredith and their Mr. Hardy and their Mrs. Humphry Ward, and we do not deny them the right to their point of view. But when they

go out of the way to institute invidious comparisons between the novelists they happen to like and such accomplished craftsmen of a different sort as Mr. Black and Mr. Blackmore, we feel bound to protest. The novelist now under consideration did not have the genius of Mr. George Meredith, for example, but he cultivated a saner method, and the talent that expresses itself by the methods of sanity is not unworthy of being ranked, in the total estimate, upon a level with the genius that expresses itself by, let us say,—that we may avoid the harsher term so obviously suggested,—the methods of perversity. Those *intellectuels*, in the name of whatever uncouth or morbid form of art they may make their plea, are not to be allowed the final word when it comes to an appraisal of so graceful and abundantly-endowed a writer as was William Black. He is likely always to be reckoned as one of the five or six best English novelists of his time—that is, of the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

JOHN FISKE.

AMERICAN scholarship suffered a serious loss in the death of John Fiske, in the Summer of 1901, at the age of fifty-nine. His health had always been so robust, and his vitality was so seemingly inexhaustible, that the news of his sudden taking-off came to us with a shock, although an observer skilled in the lore of physiology might possibly have seen in the very massiveness of that frame, with its extraordinary capacities for the consumption of meat and drink, as well as for the exercise of both physical and intellectual activities, the sign of a development so abnormal that its powers of resistance must be weakened somewhere, and would be in danger of giving way to some unusual strain. The strain came with the torrid heat that spread like a blanket over this country in the Summer of his death, and marked among its thousands of victims this distinguished historian and philosopher.

The leading facts in the life of John Fiske

may be stated in a few words. He was born in Connecticut in 1842. His true name was Edmund Fiske Green, which he changed in boyhood to that of a grandfather with whom he went to live, thus acquiring the name by which he is known to the world. He was a child of extraordinary precocity, at the age of ten or twelve mastering subjects that are usually reserved for the later stages of the education of young men. In this respect, his life suggests that of Cotton Mather or of John Stuart Mill, and the stories told of the tender years of those worthies may all be matched in the records of John Fiske's childhood. He went through Harvard College mainly as a matter of form, and remained in that institution after graduation as instructor and as an assistant in the library. When about thirty years of age he became a professional scholar and man of letters almost to the exclusion of any other occupation, although he continued to lecture, at intervals, for the rest of his life. During these years, he made his home in Cambridge, although he travelled considerably, both in this country and in Europe. Such are the modest annals of this life of devo-

tion to the things of the mind ; what remains to be said of the man who lived it must relate chiefly to his ideas and the books in which they were expressed.

Philosophy and history were the major pre-occupations of Mr. Fiske during his working years, and nearly all of his writings belong to the one or the other of these subjects, although now and then a book may be said to do hardly more than touch the fringes of either history or philosophy. This is true, for example, of the little book called 'Tobacco and Alcohol,' a spirited polemic directed against James Parton's 'Smoking and Drinking,' which latter work was a most intemperate exposition of the ideas commonly misassociated with the name of temperance. It is also true of the volumes that are made up of miscellaneous matter, for many of the essays here included represent the author's diversions rather than his serious pursuits. We are glad that he had diversions, for we owe to them much stimulating entertainment, such, for instance, as is provided by that brilliant study, published within the last few years, of the Bacon-Shakespeare delusion and its victims.

Of Mr. Fiske's two subjects, philosophy came first. He was a very young man when he made a visit to England, became acquainted with Darwin, Huxley, and Mr. Herbert Spencer, and returned home, his brain seething with the new evolutionary thought. Of this thought he became the leading American exponent, and his 'Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy,' published in 1874, was a re-statement of the Spencerian system that seemed to many readers an improvement upon the original, so greatly did Mr. Spencer's ideas benefit by the lucidity and literary art of his American disciple. This work was supplemented in a way, some years later, by two small volumes entitled 'The Destiny of Man' and 'The Idea of God,' and, after his death, by 'Life Everlasting,' a third volume in this series. These proved to be the most widely popular of Mr. Fiske's writings, but his best friends, and those having the most intimate acquaintance with his thought, looked upon them as not altogether worthy of their author. In their attempt to reconcile the teachings of science with religious dogma these books, when carefully examined, seem flavored with sophistry, and lend a sort of

countenance to beliefs that are fundamentally inconsistent with the evolutionary doctrine. In a word, they produce the impression of a writer who is not quite honest with himself, and is willing to make an intellectual compromise with a system of ideas that he is, as it were, under bonds to oppose. Even Mr. Spencer felt called upon to protest against some of the religious implications that his follower sought to fasten upon the synthetic philosophy.

About twenty years ago, Mr. Fiske turned his attention from philosophy to American history, and nearly all of his subsequent work was done in the latter field. Political philosophy served him as a bridge for this transition, and his book on 'American Political Ideas' marked the turning-point in his career. He remained to the end essentially a philosophical historian rather than a historian of manners, or even of wars, and the drum and trumpet ideal was kept as far as possible out of his work. A masterly treatment of 'The Critical Period of American History' was the first of the series of works which, although they seemed detached studies for a time, were gradually seen to take their places in what was

to prove a systematic survey of our national records. 'The Beginnings of New England' and 'The American Revolution' soon followed, and the author's design assumed solidity and continuity. Then came 'The Discovery of America,' dealing with the whole period of exploration and determination of the coast-line of the New World. After this, the order of production became more logical, for the next works were 'Virginia and Her Neighbors' and 'The Dutch and Quaker Colonies.' Here the record ends, except for a detached study of a part of the Civil War period, and a number of admirable books for schools and young people. Taken as a whole, Mr. Fiske's work in American history gives us a fairly complete treatment of the subject from the time of the discoverers down to the adoption of the Constitution, excepting, of course, the one field which is the exclusive province of Francis Parkman. It is brilliant work, fine in its literary quality, and remarkable for its judicial tone and its power to deal with conflicting opinions, determining upon which side lies the weight of the evidence. It is work that fairly places the author among our great historians, in the

group that includes Prescott and Motley, Bancroft and Parkman, Mr. Henry Adams and Mr. James Ford Rhodes.

The chief impression that is left upon the mind of one acquainted with Mr. Fiske's work in its entirety is that of a thoroughly sane and well-balanced intellect. There are so many instances of men who are clear-headed in the work that engages their best activities, yet who betray weakness in some other direction, that it is refreshing to come in contact with a mind which seems to have had no serious intellectual infirmity. The best of men are subject to occasional vagaries, and one could make up a long list of able thinkers who have 'a screw loose' somewhere, in whose mental armor there is some weak point. The vulnerable spot may be reached by spiritualism, or the single tax, or palmistry, or telepathy, or the delusions of 'Christian science' and the Baconian authorship of Shakespeare's plays. From such vagaries of the intellect John Fiske seems to have been absolutely free. His scientific and philosophical training was so comprehensive, his sense of the value of evidence was so sure, his insight into all the methods of

fraud and pretense was so unerring, that no form of pseudo-science could get a lodgment in his brain. He seems to have taken the right view of every subject to which he gave his attention, the view, that is, which is supported by the consensus of intelligent opinion among those who speak with authority. We cannot call him an original thinker, — which might be doubtful praise, if we could, — but we can say of him that he has had few equals in penetrative grasp and understanding of the more serious problems of modern science, history, and philosophy.

HAROLD FREDERIC.

AMERICAN fiction could ill afford to lose so good a writer as Harold Frederic, who died at Henley, England, on the nineteenth of October, 1898. His reputation as a novelist was hardly more than ten years old, but it was firmly fixed, and we had come to think of him as one of our foremost story-tellers, as one to the growth of whose powers there was no readily assignable limit. That he should have been taken away in the very prime of life—for he had only completed his forty-second year—is of itself a happening sufficiently tragic, and the tragedy becomes heightened by the circumstances under which he died, for he fell into the hands of those fanatics who deny the efficacy of the scientific treatment of disease, and was refused the medical attendance which might, it is claimed, have averted the disaster of his early death. A heavy indictment lies against those who were responsible for the neglect, and they stand condemned morally.

even if they are beyond the reach of the civil law.

Harold Frederic was born on a farm in central New York, August 19, 1856, of an ancestry in which English, French, and Dutch elements were commingled. His childhood was familiar with poverty, and his schooling ended with his fourteenth year. Forced thus to become a self-educated man, his subsequent career gave evidence once more of the truth — which some seek to minimize or even to deny — that education is none the less education because a man gets it by his own unaided efforts, and that the education gained in this strenuous way may be of a more solid kind than that attested by a parchment certificate. After a few years of employment, first as office-boy, then as draughtsman, then as retoucher of photographic negatives, Frederic found himself landed in journalism, and speedily made his way to the front. At twenty-four, he was one of the editors of the Utica ‘Observer’; at twenty-six, he became editor of the Albany ‘Evening Journal’; at twenty-eight, he was engaged by the New York ‘Times,’ and sent to London, as correspondent for that newspaper.

After 1884, then, his career was public property, and his death left us sadly wondering at the position he created for himself during the last fourteen years of his life, and at the amount of serious work that he had accomplished before the end.

It was, we believe, in this first year of his English life, that we first saw the name of Harold Frederic in print. It was signed to a short paper in the 'Pall Mall Gazette,' written 'by an American in London,' and devoted to an account of the condition of literary affairs in the United States. We well remember asking ourselves who this man could be, whose name was wholly unfamiliar, yet who wrote with so much assurance and intelligent grasp of his subject. It was not until some three years later that the name again attracted our attention, when it was attached to a striking story called 'Seth's Brother's Wife,' which began to appear serially in one of the magazines. From this time on — which amounts to saying for ten years — the name was well known to all American readers, and came to stand for good literary work conscientiously performed, in whatever field of activity its owner might choose to engage.

As a correspondent, Mr. Frederic's work was very widely known during the later years of his life. His London letters, printed in a number of our leading newspapers, were the most interesting of their kind, full of energy and ideas, bringing a trained mind to bear upon current questions of politics, society, and art, and embodying as much of style as could reasonably be expected of a writer who used the Atlantic cable for his instrument. Moreover, on at least two notable occasions, Mr. Frederic was not content with providing for his American public the news supplied to his hand in London, but set out to obtain news of his own by direct investigation. It was in 1884, at the outset of his career as a newspaper correspondent, that he made a personal inspection of the cholera-infected districts of Southern France and Italy. He visited Marseilles and Toulon in the days when the population of those cities was panic-stricken, and his letters upon the subject were an important contribution to our knowledge of the epidemic at a time when it was feared that even our own country was threatened with invasion by the dreaded plague. The second of the occasions

referred to was in 1891, when the recrudescence of Jew-baiting in Russia was made the subject of a personal investigation by Mr. Frederic, the result of his observations being published the following year in a graphic and impressive work entitled 'The New Exodus: A Study of Israel in Russia.'

This work, and the newspaper correspondence which he carried on for fourteen years, gave Mr. Frederic considerable prominence as a student of public affairs, and his firm grasp of political problems made him something of an authority upon contemporary history. All this work, however, is of a sort soon to be inevitably forgotten, because essentially ephemeral. But Mr. Frederic's fiction is not ephemeral, and claims for him a high place among American novelists. Ten volumes in ten years is not a bad record, when we consider that their author was by vocation a journalist, and a man of letters only by avocation, especially when we consider that the ten volumes are of a far higher character than the work of most journalists, that they are reasonably free from those touches of crudeness and vulgarity that few journalists are able to exclude from their

attempts to produce literature of the serious sort.

The ten volumes are these : 'Seth's Brother's Wife' (1887), 'The Lawton Girl' (1890), 'In the Valley' (1890), 'The Return of the O'Mahony' (1892), 'The Copperhead' (1894), 'Marsena, and Other Stories of the War' (1895), 'The Damnation of Theron Ware' (1896), 'March Hares' (1896), 'Gloria Mundi,' and 'The Market Place,' posthumously published. Of these volumes 'March Hares' and 'The Return of the O'Mahony' are extravaganzas, and stand apart from the rest. Neither of them would we willingly miss, for they display a richly humorous side of the author's fancy, the existence of which would hardly be suspected by readers of his other novels. The second of the two just named, in particular, has never enjoyed half the popularity it deserves ; for exuberant vitality it outranks the others, although this character is doubtless gained at the expense of more artistic qualities. From the other eight novels, 'In the Valley' stands apart as a work of historical fiction, in the sense that it deals with a bygone period. We make this distinction because all of the novels are historical in some sense of the

term. Of 'In the Valley,' which deals with the Revolutionary period of our history, and with the events that prepared the way for an American victory at Saratoga, we do not hesitate to say that it is one of the best historical novels that we have, a strong and vivid portrayal of one of the most stirring and pregnant periods in our national annals.

Seven books remain for a few words of characterization. Five of them deal with the region and the period that the author knew so well, the central New York of the sixties, seventies, and eighties. They accomplish for that region and that period the work of analysis and portraiture that so many of our writers are doing for other regions and contemporary periods. Two of them reproduce for us the feeling with which the old North viewed the Civil War, and show us the cross-currents of sentiment and the conflicting passions that divided non-combatants as well as combatants. Two others are more strictly domestic in their interest. The fifth, by common consent Mr. Frederic's most successful novel, has for its theme the warfare waged by two religious ideals in the battle-field of a man's soul;

but even this powerful work is at the same time a richly observant study of provincial American society. The two posthumous novels deal with English life, and must be reckoned less valuable than their predecessors. We may perhaps be permitted to quote, in closing, a few words that we wrote of the best of these novels at the time of its appearance: 'Mr. Frederic has aimed to produce a great and typical picture of American life, and an unerring instinct has taught him that such a picture must be concerned with the life of a small community rather than with the more attractive but also more sophisticated civilization of the great cities. It is in the small community that the mainsprings of a nation's strength are to be felt most distinctly and the elements of its weakness most clearly discerned; it is here that its fundamental ideals are most naïvely offered to the view.' These words were written of 'The Damnation of Theron Ware,' but their application extends to the greater number of Mr. Frederic's novels, and for this reason they are here reproduced.

RICHARD MALCOLM JOHNSTON.

IN a contribution to 'Literature,' Mr. W. D. Howells discusses the Southern literary product of the United States, saying of Mr. Harris and Mr. Cable that they are 'certainly the best known' of our recent Southern writers, and supposing 'there can be no question but they are the first.' The task of arranging writers according to their rank is always invidious and usually unprofitable, but in this case the death of Colonel Richard Malcolm Johnston, makes it necessary to question the dicta of Mr. Howells, and to assert that no list, however narrowly restricted, of our foremost Southern writers can be accepted if it does not include the name of that novelist, scholar, and gentleman. The omission by our eccentric critic of Mr. Johnston's name may, however, be attributed to a strange misconception. In the same article, Mr. Howells speaks of 'a school of Southern humorists before the war,' and, after describing their work as 'atro-

cious,' says that he wishes 'distinctly to except from this censure the "Dukesborough Tales" and the other sketches by the same author, which have a whimsical grace and are simple and often sweet, with a satisfying air of truth.' We infer from this that Mr. Johnston is reckoned among the *ante-bellum* writers, whereas the 'Dukesborough Tales' made their first collected appearance in 1883, and their author had done nothing at all in the way of literary production until four or five years previously, when the publication of a few tales and sketches in the magazines first directed attention to his name.

Mr. Johnston is given a unique position in our literature by the fact that he was nearly sixty years old before he began to be a writer, and that back of his literary period there lies nearly a lifetime of activity as a lawyer and a professor of literature. He was, then, an *ante-bellum* writer only in the sense that his fiction dealt almost exclusively with a period long ante-dating the Civil War, and restored for a new generation a past that had vanished from the memory of most living men. The period was that of the thirties and forties, and the place Middle Georgia, a time

and a region of which the 'form and pressure' are preserved to us in Mr. Johnston's books with a faithfulness of delineation and a geniality of conception barely equalled and certainly unsurpassed by the best of the younger school of 'local' writers whose work forms so important a part of recent imaginative literature in this country.'

The Middle Georgia of the novelist's youth and early manhood is made so interesting a subject for our contemplation that a few quotations from him in his character as historian of his native section rather than as story-teller, may fittingly be reproduced upon this occasion. In a paper written only three years before his death, to be read before the Twentieth Century Club of Chicago, Mr. Johnston said:

'If ever there was a man who felt himself to be absolutely a freeman, it was the rustic of Middle Georgia. . . . The poorest white man had no apprehension of falling into the lower scale, and so his ambitions were the freer and the more cheerful to lift himself higher. . . . In my own immediate neighborhood, some seventy-five miles west, not one grown man in five had ever been to Augusta, then a town of some six thousand. . . . Sometimes in an argument between two rural persons one, who might be on the verge of defeat, if by some

sort of chance, not enjoyed by his adversary, he had been to Augusta, might look upon him with such contempt as was possible to feel, and say: "Now look here, John, has you ever been to Augusty?" On the sad acknowledgement in the negative, he might add: "Well, then, don't try to talk to me about sech matters, because they is matters as can't be complete understood except by them as has been to Augusty." . . . To one who remembers the conditions and incidents of such a society it seems difficult to overpraise its neighborliness, the healthfulness, the confidence, the warm affectionateness which — except among mean people, and mean people are in every community — generally obtained. None were very rich and none very poor, but rich and poor, especially among men, intermingled with the freedom of intercourse that was productive of results most beneficial to all. . . . Aristotle taught that leaders in societies should think like wise men, but talk like the common people. That was just what was done by leading citizens of Georgia three-quarters of a century ago. . . . The noble Georgia dialect savored in much affectionate sweetness. Much of it, as I have been told in letters from eminent philologists, is a relic of English as spoken three and four centuries ago. . . . The greatest lawyers and politicians and even divines loved it to the degree that they habitually spoke it, if not at home before their wives and children, at least in social intercourse among their neighbors.'

Such was the almost idyllic social life, and such the dialect, of the people who live for us in Mr. Johnston's fiction. No phase of local

American society has received more faithful and loving depiction anywhere in our literature, and the peculiar value of Mr. Johnston's stories is in their application to a comparatively early period of the realistic methods of recent literary art. The older writers neglected their opportunity, or did not know how to make effective use of it, but the facts were recorded upon the sensitive plate of Mr. Johnston's memory and given fresh vitality in the alembic of his genius. There is dialect in profusion in his books, but it gives no offence, for we easily distinguish it from the spurious effusions of dialect that have made their eruption in our fiction of recent years. It is the genuine thing, the inevitable garment of the thought which it clothes; it is not adventitious, written for a wanton satisfaction in the misspelling of words. It is, moreover, carefully studied and conscientiously reproduced, combining the scholar's instinct for exact truth with the artist's instinct for effective expression.

The following list includes the more important of Mr. Johnston's works of fiction: 'Dukesborough Tales,' 'Old Mark Langston,' 'Two Gray Tourists,' 'Mr. Absalom Billingslea,'

‘Ogeechee Cross-Firings,’ ‘Widow Guthrie,’ ‘Old Times in Middle Georgia,’ ‘The Primes and Their Neighbors,’ ‘Mr. Billy Downs and His Likes,’ and ‘Pearce Amerson’s Will.’ Of these works, ‘Widow Guthrie’ is the longest and the most serious, but the peculiar gifts of the author appear to better advantage when he works within narrower limits, and one is apt to recall most vividly some of the ‘Dukesborough Tales’ or some of the sketches contained in ‘Old Times in Middle Georgia.’ In addition to his fiction, he published a life of Alexander H. Stevens (in collaboration with Mr. W. H. Browne), and two volumes of ‘Studies, Literary and Social.’ The latter volumes are excellent reading, and deserve a high rank among books of essays, although it takes some effort so to readjust the mental focus as to think of the author’s discoursing seriously upon such subjects as ‘Belisarius,’ or ‘American Philosophy,’ or ‘The Minnesinger and Meistersinger,’ or ‘Shakespeare’s Tragic Lovers.’

Richard Malcolm Johnston was born in 1822, on a plantation in Middle Georgia. When a boy he removed with his family to Powellton (the Dukesborough of the tales). He studied at

Mercer University, Macon, and fitted for the bar. A law partnership with Linton Stephens, a younger brother of Alexander H. Stephens, lasted for about ten years, when he became a professor in the University of Georgia, at Athens. From this time on, his occupations were teaching, lecturing, and writing. In middle life he became a member of the Roman Catholic Church. Married at an early age, his domestic life was singularly happy, and the death, a little over a year before his own, of the woman who had been the devoted partner of his joys and sorrows for over fifty years left him — to take his own pathetic words from a letter to a friend — ‘poor indeed and lowly prostrate.’ But he added: ‘Yet I feel no diminution of willingness to do the work of the remainder of my time, and hope for continuance of the strength necessary for it.’ A year after these words were written he lay dying in the hospital at Baltimore, the city with which he had been identified during the latter period of his life. When, in September, 1898, he breathed his last, he bequeathed to American literature a body of work that will not soon be forgotten, and to those who enjoyed the privilege

of his friendship the memory of a fine spirit, gentle in the truest sense of the term, the soul of cordiality, courtliness, and chivalry. He was dear to all who knew him, and will be remembered as we remember only those for whom our affection is the deepest.

ALPHONSE DAUDET.

FRENCH literature could ill afford to spare the graceful pen of Alphonse Daudet. Within five years it lost in Renan its greatest *prosateur* in the domain of scholarship, in Taine its greatest philosophical historian, in Leconte de Lisle its greatest poet, and in Alphonse Daudet its greatest novelist. This does not mean that Daudet was a great novelist in the sense of Hugo or Balzac, or even of Stendhal or Flaubert, but simply that among the writers of fiction left living during the last fifteen years of the century he was clearly the most important, and that we may scan the horizon of dawning reputations in vain for indications of any other likely to occupy as large a place in the literature of the Republic. His success was hardly and honorably won, and his career was that of a typical man of letters. The story of his obscure origin, of his early struggles for a livelihood, of his eventual recognition, of his constantly growing reputation and the golden

sunset of his assured fame, is of the old sort so familiar to the student of literary history, although one not often to be read in books as charming as those in which Daudet has himself told it — in ‘*Le Petit Chose*,’ to begin with, and later in ‘*Trente Ans de Paris*,’ and the ‘*Souvenirs d’un Homme de Lettres*.’

Daudet was a Provençal by birth, and saw the light at Nîmes in 1840. His boyhood was spent in his native city and in Lyons. He then obtained a position as usher in a country school, but a year of this drudgery was all that he could bear, and at the age of seventeen he started to seek his fortune in Paris. From this time until the War of 1870, he struggled to gain a foothold in the world of letters, receiving support for a time from a clerical position in the civil service, and finding happiness in marriage with the talented woman who ever after remained his devoted companion and counsellor. His first book was ‘*Les Amoureuses*,’ a volume of love poems. Other collections of verse followed, and quickly won for the young writer a reputation. He also essayed the drama, producing nine plays in all, besides the later dramatizations of his

novels. His plays had no great success, and their titles convey little to the average theatre-goer or reader of dramatic literature.

These tentative efforts in the lyric and dramatic provinces of literature were supplemented by journalistic work done for 'Le Figaro' and other papers, and in this work we find the sketches and short stories in which Daudet's true artistic self was first revealed. 'Le Petit Chose,' that exquisite fragment of autobiography, dates from 1868, and before the *année terrible* he had also produced the charming 'Lettres de Mon Moulin.' When the war was over, his position as the greatest master of the short story was still further strengthened by the 'Contes du Lundi,' the 'Contes et Récits,' and other collections. The best of these pieces are the purest gems of their sort in modern French literature. Equal in perfection of form to the stories of Maupassant, they have a substance which the stories of the later master rarely exhibit, and the pathos of such studies as 'La Dernière Classe' and 'Le Siège de Berlin' is well-nigh flawless. He is indeed to be pitied who can read with dry eyes these masterpieces in miniature. The short stories gave

to their author just the sort of training in the niceties of literary art that was needed to develop his powers as a full-grown novelist, and enable him to produce, during the following quarter-century, the series of fiction that gave him an unrivalled position among the French novelists of his time. Other works were written in this later period, but they are of minor importance — *réchauffés* or chips from a literary workshop — and reveal no development of power beyond what was displayed when Daudet the novelist was yet artistically unborn.

The first of Daudet's books written *de longue haleine* was the famous 'Tartarin de Tarascon,' dated 1872. In this book and its two successors, 'Tartarin sur les Alpes' (1886), and 'Port-Tarascon' (1890), he achieved his greatest title to literary fame, for these three works projected into literature one of its few immortal types of character. The creation of Tartarin stands only just below such figures as Falstaff and Sancho Panza. The intensely human figure of Daudet's lion-hunter, mountain-climber, and colonial adventurer is a fascinating study in all three phases of his self-glorious career; all the color of the

midi glows from the pages in which his exploits are set forth, and all the humorous or lovable foibles of the Provençal are delineated with a touch that is incisive without being painful, with a geniality that robs satire of its sting, and finds in happy and wholesome laughter a universal solvent for the most varied sentiments and emotions. Whatever else may be forgotten, the story of Tartarin will be remembered, and will remain among the classics of nineteenth century literature.

The greater part of Daudet's career as a novelist was, however, devoted to the production of studies of modern life which have made him the chief interpreter of the second imperial and third republican periods of French society. They do not, it is true, present us a delineation comparable for minute observation and comprehensiveness with the record of the restoration period that is made in the forty volumes of the 'Comédie Humaine,' for not every age can produce a Balzac, but they do provide us with a series of careful studies wherein much of recent French life is pictured, and which have a charm of style that was beyond the reach of Daudet's great

predecessor. Two or three of these books are comparatively insignificant, but at least eight of them are masterpieces in a very genuine sense. They are, in the order of their publication, 'Fromont Jeune et Risler Aîné' (1874), 'Jack' (1876), 'Le Nabab' (1878), 'Rois en Exil' (1879), 'Numa Roumestan' (1880), 'L'Évangéliste' (1883), 'Sapho' (1884), and 'L'Immortel' (1888). These books are, on the whole, the most remarkable collection of novels produced by any Frenchman under the Third Republic.

Space fails us in which to characterize in any detail this series of *dramas parisiens*. They are all well-known to English readers, for they have been promptly translated as they have appeared. The first of them (called 'Sidonie' in the English version) was, we remember, made the subject of considerable cheap moralizing when it appeared in our language, with the natural consequence that it became widely known. Much water has flowed under the bridges since then, and so many writers using the English language have bettered whatever instruction in immorality was to be derived from the literature of France that

‘Sidonie’ would now be considered very mildly offensive even by the self-constituted professional guardians of our literary virtue. Daudet has sometimes been called the French Dickens, an ascription which is merely absurd if based upon any comparison between the humor, say, of the ‘Tartarin’ books and of ‘Pickwick,’ but which has some slight justification if referred to the pathos of ‘Jack,’ that poignant narrative whose chief fault is its excessive length. Daudet’s third novel, ‘Le Nabab,’ is probably his masterpiece, although this claim may perhaps be contested by the partisans of ‘Numa Roumestan’ or of ‘Sapho.’ The book is a brilliant picture of Parisian life under the Second Empire, and it portrays the corruption of that period with an unsparing brush, although the figure of Mora is delineated with a more kindly hand than actual history warrants — a fact easily explained when we remember that he is no other than the Duc de Morny, whom the novelist served as a secretary for a number of years. This figure and that of Numa Roumestan (who is Gambetta somewhat more disguised) are the most conspicuous illustrations of the novelist’s habit of

introducing prominent public characters into his fictions. The 'Rois en Exil' is a gallery of such figures, and if the 'Astier-Rehu' of 'L'Immortel' is not any particular academician, there are not a few who might have found themselves more or less caricatured in him. Something ought to be said about 'Sapho,' yet a few words would be less adequate than none at all. The inscription 'pour mes fils quand ils auront vingt ans' indicates that the work is not milk for babes or food for bread-and-butter misses, and shows also how large a question any discussion of such a book must raise. From the technical standpoint of literary art 'Sapho' is as nearly perfect as anything that the author ever wrote.

The literary characteristics of Daudet are admirably outlined by Professor B. W. Wells, upon whose 'Modern French Literature' we have relied for many of the dates and other matters of fact given in the present sketch. We are told that 'to the naturalistic temper he brought the mind of an idyllic poet,' that rather than 'architectural power' he had 'the style of an impressionist painter.' The resulting product 'attains the highest effects of art without arti-

ficiality, and is at once classical and modern.' These formulæ serve fairly well to express the essence of Alphonse Daudet's work and to record the residual impression left by many years of acquaintance with his varied books of fiction.

VICTOR CHERBULIEZ.

THERE are readers not a few to whom the death of Victor Cherbuliez proved a loss altogether out of proportion to his importance as a figure in French literature. 'I could have better spared a better man' was the feeling, if not the utterance, of the many thousands to whom the long series of his novels had been an unfailing source of entertainment and delight. The appearance of a new book by this talented writer never brought with it the thrill of a prospective sensation, and never led, as far as we are aware, to any excited public discussion, ranging its friends and its enemies in two opposing camps. But the promise of each new novel (after the first few had given evidence of the writer's quality) aroused in the novelist's ever-widening audience a sense of quiet anticipatory satisfaction that was, perhaps, as fine a tribute to his merit as the loud outcries which heralded the books of the more conspicuous among his contemporaries.

No less than twenty-two novels came from the pen of this industrious writer during the thirty-five years of his literary activity. Most of them made their first appearance in 'La Revue des Deux Mondes,' for which periodical Cherbuliez became as much of a stand-by as George Sand had been during the preceding quarter-century or more. The list of the novels is as follows: 'Le Comte Kostia,' 'Prosper Randoce,' 'Paule Méré,' 'Le Roman d'une Honnête Femme,' 'Le Grand-Œuvre,' 'L'Aventure de Ladislas Bolski,' 'La Revanche de Joseph Noirel,' 'Méta Holdenis,' 'Miss Rovel,' 'Le Fiancé de Mlle. Saint-Maur,' 'Samuel Brohl et Cie.,' 'L'Idée de Jean Têterol,' 'Amours Fragiles,' 'Noirs et Rouges,' 'La Ferme du Choquard,' 'Olivier Maugant,' 'La Bête,' 'La Vocation du Comte Ghislain,' 'Une Gageure,' 'Le Secret du Précepteur,' 'Après Fortune Faite,' and 'Jacquine Vanesse.' A number of these novels have been translated into English, but the majority, we should say, have not thus been made accessible to those who do not read the original. And, in our opinion, an enterprising publisher in England or the United States

would find his account in a complete uniform edition of this series of books.

In attempting to characterize the work of Cherbuliez, it will be best to begin with a few negative statements. We have already said that his novels are not sensational; this statement may be amplified by noting that they offer no devotion to the goddess of lubricity, that they are neither erotic nor neurotic, and that they are concerned with problems only as the novelist finds problems useful for the illustration of character. Their delineative power is, moreover, not remarkable; it betrays the hand of the craftsman rather than that of the creative artist, and the entire gallery of figures includes few that remain living in the memory. When we compare the most studied of the types offered us by Cherbuliez with even the minor types of the 'Comédie Humaine,' this distinction becomes so obvious that it needs no argument. It may also be said that the novels of Cherbuliez have little or no atmosphere; they have instead a great deal of careful local coloring, and over them all is shed the dry light of the philosophical intelligence.

Essaying now a more positive sort of criticism, we must emphasize once more the unfailing interest of these books. The characters are galvanized into just enough of vitality to produce a fairly complete illusion when they are before us. They are, furthermore, arranged in extremely interesting relations with one another, and the ingenuity of the author in devising new situations is really extraordinary. An additional element of freshness is provided by the great variety of scenes to which we are introduced, and by the extent to which characters of other nationalities than the author's own are made to figure. The descriptive powers of the novelist are admirable, and we 'skip' in reading him at the peril of missing something delightful or important. In fact, his readers soon learn that they cannot afford to 'skip' him, for his books have almost no padding, and are finished in the minutest details. Economy of material, united with crispness in expression and deftness in the lesser touches of his brush, form a combination of qualities that go far toward explaining his charm. That he is both a man of the world and a scholar trained in the processes of exact thought are two further

facts that are frequently borne in upon the reader's mind ; the former by the ease of the author's manner when dealing with many diverse conditions of society, the latter by the minute and accurate knowledge of a great range of subjects, displayed by him without ostentation as the particular occasion demands, and in the aggregate too extensive and solid to be accounted for by any theory of cramming or 'reading up' for the special purpose at hand. When we add to all that has been said the fact that a gentle irony pervades his work, tempering its good sense and general sanity just enough to keep it from being dull and prosaic, we have, in a measure at least, accounted for the feeling with which, having read every one of the twenty-two novels, and expecting to read all of them again in default of fresh ones, we heard of the death of Victor Cherbuliez.

There is little to be learned from a chronological study of this man's books. He was one of those writers who early make their mark, and never alter it very much after it is once made. His first books and his last display about the same characteristics, and his qualities, together

with their attendant defects, appear about as distinctly in the 'Comte Kostia' of 1863 as in the 'Jacquine Vanesse' of 1898. His best books are scattered among the others, and bear dates widely separated. We might name among them 'Le Roman d'une Honnête Femme,' 'Méta Holdenis,' and 'Le Secret du Précepteur,' but it seems invidious to single out even two or three, because the others are nearly as good. Still, those just named may be recommended to readers desirous of making the acquaintance of Cherbuliez; the taste once acquired may be trusted not to content itself with so little.

It should be remembered, also, that Cherbuliez did a great deal of writing that was not in the form of fiction. Indeed, his *début* as a man of letters marked him out for a critic of art and a student of antiquity rather than for a novelist. This book was entitled 'Un Cheval de Phidias,' further described as a series of 'Causeries Athéniennes.' A later volume of what was essentially art criticism was called 'L'Art et la Nature.' Cherbuliez was also a publicist and critic of contemporary society and politics, in this capacity writing regularly for 'La Revue des Deux

Mondes,' under the pseudonym of 'G. Valbert,' for a long term of years. His miscellaneous papers upon these subjects were collected into a series of volumes bearing such titles as 'Profils Etrangers,' 'L'Espagne Politique,' 'L'Allemagne Politique,' 'Hommes et Choses d'Allemagne,' and 'Hommes et Choses du Temps Présent.' Finally, we mention the fact that two of his novels, 'Samuel Brohl' and 'Ladislas Bolski,' were dramatized by him, and won a certain success upon the boards.

Charles Victor Cherbuliez (to give him for once his unfamiliar full name) was born in Geneva, July 19, 1829. His death early in July, 1899, thus found him within a few days of the completion of his seventieth year. He was descended from a Protestant family that had found refuge in Switzerland after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and in 1880 reclaimed his French citizenship under the provisions of the law provided for that purpose. His education was cosmopolitan, begun in Geneva, and continued in Paris, Bonn, and Berlin. In 1881 he became one of the Forty, and in 1892, an officer of the Legion of Honor. Long after his

resumption of French citizenship he continued to live in Geneva, where he occupied a chair in the University. These are the chief facts of his externally uneventful career; his real life is revealed to us in the many volumes of his published writings.

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